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STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON SCOPE OF EIS

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Monday, July 1, 2002
700 South Second Street
Hearing Room C
Mount Vernon, Washington

1 (5:55 p.m.)

2 PROCEEDINGS

3 MS. PRATT: Welcome.

4 I have such command of audiences, I can
5 tell.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Should we clap?

7 MS. PRATT: How about taking a seat so we
8 can get started and so everyone will have a
9 chance to ask questions?

10 Welcome. I'm really pleased to see you
11 all here. My name is Cynthia Pratt. I'm the
12 SEPA coordinator for the Department of Fish and
13 Wildlife. I'm also the Responsible Official for
14 our agency. And my job is to make sure the
15 process goes through correctly through the SEPA
16 rules. I am not the project leader. I'll be
17 introducing that person in a minute.

18 As you can see from this title, it doesn't
19 say Grandy Creek acclimation pond. It's a
20 working title. It was on purpose because what I
21 want to do is make sure that we encourage all
22 the comments and suggestions to alternatives for
23 this project, but be aware one of the
24 alternatives is to put in a Grandy Creek
25 acclimation pond. If I'd have said that, that's

1 sort of saying that we're building this thing
2 without a purpose, and that is not true. We
3 have -- the purpose of this originally is to go
4 through the EIS process and to answer -- to come
5 up with a purpose for our -- the needs we have
6 identified.

7 It has been expressed by our constituents
8 that they would like more steelhead fishing
9 opportunity in the Skagit area. And in order to
10 do that we -- I have -- and these are not -- the
11 purpose and need is not -- I'm -- I'm just
12 paraphrasing this because in the EIS they will
13 be more developed, but the purpose, then, is to
14 optimize harvestable steelhead fishing in the
15 area while still protecting wild steelhead
16 stocks.

17 Given that, we need to come up with
18 various alternatives that would do that. It is
19 our agency's contention that building an
20 acclimation pond at Grandy Creek will do that,
21 but there may be other alternatives that will
22 still accomplish that purpose.

23 And so the purpose here and -- and when I
24 sent out the scoping notice, is to invite all of
25 you to give comments, come up with alternatives,

1 discuss impacts to this project, come up --
2 suggest mitigation procedures and what other
3 comments you would like to add.

4 Let's see. After we have gotten some
5 of -- some of your comments in from both you and
6 from written comments, then we'll start
7 formulating the EIS, coming up with --
8 evaluating other alternatives in comparison with
9 the Grandy Creek acclimation pond. And this
10 will help us decide on the preferred action or
11 actions.

12 Let me introduce the people here. First
13 of all, Chuck Johnson, who is with the
14 hatcheries division, is the project lead. There
15 is also Ray Berg who is not here. He's the
16 engineering -- with the engineering division.
17 He's handling the logistics for coordinating
18 meetings, pulling things together. And so you
19 may see both of their names there.

20 The consultants who are writing the EIS is
21 FishPro, and that's Patty Michak and Letitia
22 Wheeler. And they will be discussing some of
23 the maps and aerial photos in the back when I
24 get to them.

25 Let's see. Before we get to having them

1 discuss that, though, I want to make sure that
2 we go over some guidelines and ground rules.
3 You'll see some of these very worn poster boards
4 up there, and I've tried to kind of put -- put
5 them together in how I think this meeting should
6 occur. And one of the things is as people are
7 talking, please listen, because you want to
8 understand what they're saying. Everyone has a
9 right to their comment. Be respectful. Don't
10 interrupt. These are obviously things that all
11 of us should know, but sometimes we get carried
12 away and people get cut off in the middle of
13 things.

14 We're to work on the solution. And
15 remember, the purpose has been outlined for you.
16 No personal attacks. Now, that sounds very
17 strange. Obviously we are not going to take a
18 club to everyone, but sometimes we disagree so
19 adamantly with someone we end up taking -- we
20 get personal with our comments, and I hope we
21 don't do that here.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You shouldn't
23 believe everything you hear about Skagit County.

24 MS. PRATT: Right.

25 Let -- we would like people to go one

1 person at a time. Raise your hand. Identify
2 yourself. Give your name and address. And this
3 is very important because we have a court
4 reporter here and she's capturing your comments.
5 But I really do need your name and address so
6 that I know that you are on our distribution
7 list, that your comments get identified as we go
8 through the EIS, and it will help us to have
9 your name and address.

10 It says make good suggestions. Well, that
11 sounds -- what does that mean? But the way I
12 identify good solutions is based on your best
13 judgment that they seemed reasonable. You know,
14 you -- obviously you could say that you could
15 shut down fishing for the next 800 years. I'm
16 not sure that's reasonable. Okay? So it's --
17 you know, just what you think is reasonable.

18 Stick to the agenda. We welcome comments,
19 and it is -- that's the main thing we're here,
20 is to hear from you.

21 Let me see if I've covered everything.

22 This is not a public hearing. That may
23 be -- seem like that we're in a hearing room,
24 but this is strictly a public meeting to listen
25 to what you have to say. And so that's why we

1 don't have this microphone. We're not going to
2 take numbers. We're not going to do anything.
3 It's -- it's an open meeting.

4 If you do not want to comment tonight,
5 please send in your comments or e-mail them to
6 me. My e-mail is on the -- the Determination of
7 Significance Scoping Notice. If you don't have
8 it in your hand it's prattcrp@dfw.wa.gov. So
9 it's prattcrp -- uh-huh. Late again.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm never late.

11 MS. PRATT: Also, you could -- there is
12 some extra paper back there that you can write
13 your comments on or questions on. I've put
14 plenty of extra paper.

15 So our task tonight is to comment on
16 possible impacts, to evaluate, select -- suggest
17 solutions that might accomplish the same
18 purpose, suggest mitigation if you have some
19 ideas, discuss ways that will allow you to stay
20 informed.

21 If you have questions, please feel free to
22 ask them. And again, state your name. If you
23 have an organization that you belong to that you
24 want to be identified with, please state that.
25 And on the pieces of paper, if you turn in that,

1 be sure to put your name and address on that
2 also.

3 So with that I'm going to have Patty just
4 briefly mentioned that -- the maps and the
5 overheads. And let me just shut this down.

6 MS. MICHAH: I think I'll just get
7 started. In the back I just -- we have just
8 some photos and some old site plans from the
9 Grandy Creek site. On the far side is an aerial
10 photo of the Grandy Creek site. You see the old
11 hatchery that was taken -- we're not exactly
12 sure of the date of the photo but it was a
13 number of years ago. The site is now totally
14 overgrown with the blackberries. So it's
15 actually a nice visual history of the site. You
16 can actually see what's still existing out
17 there.

18 Next to it is just a vicinity map. And
19 then we have a CAD drawing of the -- the actual
20 working facilities. This is a site plan. And
21 then the display on the far right is just a
22 brief synopsis of some of the issues and -- and
23 sections within the -- that will be covered
24 within the EIS.

25 And I'll just do, Cynthia, just a quick

1 run through of -- of kind of the sections that
2 will be covered within the EIS.

3 MS. PRATT: Excellent.

4 MS. MICHAK: We'll have a summary of the
5 project up front, which is typical. We'll have
6 the alternatives discussed, the proposed action,
7 and then the preferred alternative and
8 alternatives to whatever they fall out based on
9 information from this meeting and input from
10 everyone we get input from in this whole
11 process, and then we'll have a no-action
12 alternative.

13 We'll discuss elements of the environment,
14 the natural environment and the built
15 environment. So we'll look at earth issues,
16 which would be geology, soils, topography,
17 erosion potential, stream sinuosity at both
18 Grandy Creek and the Skagit River. We'll get
19 air quality, water quality, ground water,
20 surface water, runoff issues, absorption issues,
21 flooding and water supplies, different options
22 for water supplies.

23 We'll look at listed proposed candidates
24 and listed species within the area, both animals
25 and plants. We'll look at migratory corridors,

1 use of the site, and we'll look at genetic
2 interactions between hatchery and wild fish for
3 the proposed -- whatever the proposed program
4 will be, and we'll look at riparian habitat
5 issues for any built structures being proposed.

6 And then within the built environment
7 we'll look at environmental health such as
8 noise, land use issues, the historic views,
9 recreation, and then transportation as far as
10 impacts to the local environment or fish hauling
11 and activity on -- in and off the site.

12 So that's just a -- kind of a quick
13 synopsis of the issues that will be discussed
14 within the EIS.

15 MS. PRATT: Are there any other questions
16 directed at her?

17 If not, let's turn it over to Chuck to
18 lead the meeting. And --

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Do you want me to wait
20 until you're done or do you just want to launch
21 in?

22 MS. PRATT: What?

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Have you got
24 everything off?

25 MS. PRATT: I have no idea.

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I'm not getting near
2 that thing.

3 MS. PRATT: I think I'll let it cool down
4 just slightly and deal with it in a minute.

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

6 All right. My name is Chuck Johnson. I'm
7 with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the
8 Hatchery Division, and I'm the project leader
9 for the proposal we're making to go through this
10 process for the purpose of constructing an
11 acclimation facility in the Skagit Basin. And
12 Grandy Creek is our obvious -- you know, at
13 least our first proposal to look at. And that's
14 for the purpose of acclimating hatchery winter
15 steelhead in that vicinity, and recapturing
16 adults for egg take purposes, needs,
17 collectively between the three sites that would
18 be -- if we're successful with this project we'd
19 have Barnaby Slough and the Marblemount hatchery
20 appropriately as well.

21 THE COURT REPORTER: Excuse me.

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes.

23 THE COURT REPORTER: I can't hear you very
24 well.

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Oh, all right.

1 THE COURT REPORTER: You said Barnaby
2 Slough --

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Barnaby Slough and
4 Marblemount Hatchery. They are the other
5 components of our hatchery production within the
6 Skagit Basin.

7 So with that, this proposal, as you
8 probably heard already or read about in the
9 news, at least, it's called an acclimation
10 facility and not a hatchery and there's reason
11 for that. It's not a full hatchery. There's no
12 housing provided here. It's an acclimation
13 site. We've not scoped out exactly how many
14 ponds yet or exactly what it will look like, but
15 we'll be -- we'll be working on that as we go
16 through this EIS process and complete the
17 permitting, looking forward to that and having
18 that successful in helping this get designed to
19 fit our needs of what our goals are for
20 production.

21 We're currently already providing and the
22 goal is for 534,000 smolts annually of the
23 hatchery winter steelhead released in the basin,
24 and some of those, a portion of those now are
25 being released in the vicinity of Grandy Creek

1 and the Skagit River that are providing some
2 opportunity, and that -- that component is
3 not -- additional ones on top of that would
4 be -- would be the ones that would be targeted
5 for this acclimation site.

6 What else can I say?

7 And with that -- so I guess I want to make
8 ano -- one more comment before we open up the
9 questions, is that this is not the original
10 proposal that evolved from the early -- late
11 eighties to the early nineties. It has taken a
12 different shape. It's a different proposal.
13 This agency -- currently our policy makers and
14 director is extremely -- very, very strongly
15 behind this project and the agency is committed
16 to constructing -- eventually being successful
17 in the process to implement and construct this
18 facility, acclimation pond.

19 And with that we'd like to open it up, as
20 Cynthia said, for comments or questions. I'm
21 here to help -- all of us are to help with
22 technical questions and -- or with questions
23 more about the site itself, what we're doing.
24 And then we ask that you state your name and
25 address for the court reporter so we can have

1 that available.

2 Yes.

3 MR. POOLMAN: Lyle Poolman, 1202 South
4 12th, Mount Vernon.

5 You kind of caught me by surprise when you
6 said 520- or -30,000 exclusive of what we're
7 already putting in. If this were to go through,
8 what would be the net increase in the number of
9 plants of smolt? I thought it was going to be
10 530- more. Apparently not. So what is the net?

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: The net gain is not
12 any at this point. We're not proposing to
13 increase the current production that we've
14 achieved.

15 If I go back a little bit, the original
16 proposal for when we're talking about the full
17 hatchery --

18 THE COURT REPORTER: Excuse me. He needs
19 to come over this -- can you -- can you step
20 over this way?

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

22 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry.

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: You need to hear me.

24 THE COURT REPORTER: Yeah. It's -- you're
25 talking over that way.

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

2 Anyway, the original proposal was to bring
3 the production up from a level that was at 534-.
4 That was the proposal. Well, since merging --
5 since merging the two agencies in '94 and '95 we
6 now have added a facility to that mix that's
7 able to support that production within the
8 basin. Okay? Before they couldn't do that.
9 They were always bringing them in out of basin,
10 bringing them in from Chambers Creek down to
11 Tacoma or other facilities, like Tokul Creek
12 down in Snohomish Basin. But we've been able to
13 rear those fish within the basin itself with the
14 addition and the changes we've made at the
15 Marblemount Hatchery.

16 And so we're -- we're now bumping up
17 against that production goal that was
18 originally -- what we originally proposed to
19 build a hatchery that couldn't produce that.
20 Well, now we're able to achieve that within the
21 mix of the sloughs we've got. The only thing we
22 would like to be able to do is have an
23 acclimation site to release the (inaudible) of
24 these, rather than dumping them in the river.
25 And then for the fisheries, for the fisheries in

1 the lower river, rather than trucking and just
2 dumping them and having them come back and stray
3 around, we want to have an acclimation and
4 release facility that can increase the quality
5 of the smolt, the -- hopefully it will lead to
6 additional survival, productivity for better
7 opportunity, as well as provide more recapture
8 so we can, No. 1, help remove them from the
9 system as a hatchery fish versus a wild, and
10 help deal with some compliance issues in a
11 listed stock area, and also will help us with
12 our egg take goals to ensure that we can
13 collectively meet that within the basin, and not
14 have to go out of basin to import the eggs
15 and/or smolts. If that helps clear that up.

16 Yes. In the back.

17 MR. McMILLAN: My name is Bill McMillan.

18 THE COURT REPORTER: I can't hear you.

19 MR. McMILLAN: Bill McMillan. I live in
20 Sedro-Woolley.

21 I am -- I'm a little bit confused on what
22 you're saying. Are -- are you saying that the
23 present level of plantings in the Skagit are
24 around 500,000 hatchery steelhead, or are you
25 saying that that's the goal to get up to?

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Our goal -- our goal
2 right now, listed as production goal, is 534,000
3 smolts annually.

4 MR. McMILLAN: What -- what is presently
5 released into the Skagit?

6 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: We -- we're not quite
7 at that point yet. We're not quite at 534,000.
8 We've been in the -- in the range of 480,000,
9 500,000. Some of that's -- in the recent couple
10 years I know some of that's been due to lack of
11 root stock availability between the Snohomish
12 Basin and the Puyallup Basin, Skagit Basin and
13 the hatchery stock itself. There's been some
14 poor returns. Egg take goals have not been
15 sufficient to meet all those demands so we
16 haven't, like, tried to have this goal be the
17 priority. But our goal is 534,000 smolts per
18 year. And it's difficult -- it's -- it's
19 pushing the envelope for the facilities we have.

20 The first -- what I mentioned earlier was
21 Marblemount Hatchery and Barnaby Slough. But
22 with -- thanks. God. But with the -- with the
23 proposal that we're talking about, an additional
24 acclimation facility in the lower river that
25 will help with our (inaudible) conditions and

1 quality and release and recapture, that should
2 improve that -- that overall harvest
3 opportunity, maybe more certainty associated
4 with that, and definitely for the lower river.

5 MR. MCMILLAN: At the -- at the time that
6 the Grandy Creek was originally planned, the
7 original plan back in -- earlier in the
8 nineties, wasn't the production at that point in
9 time somewhere between 200- and 250,000 in
10 regards to release into the Skagit?

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: You know, I don't go
12 back that far for the Department of Wildlife.
13 I'm old fisheries, and I apologize for that. I
14 know it's less than 534-, yes. I don't know
15 what that number would be. I could get --

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The original plans
17 on that was 1.2 million.

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: For the proposed full
19 hatchery?

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was -- that
21 was from the hatchery, yes.

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Initially.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Initially. And
24 then it went down to this 534-.

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Right.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Never down to 250-.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, that -- I was
3 just trying to clarify that we have -- since the
4 534- is established, and the agency agreed to
5 move forward, co-managers agreed, that's been
6 the number that's been maintained, or a goal to
7 shoot for. Building this facility or proposed
8 facility does not change that number at this
9 point in time.

10 Yes, sir.

11 MR. TUCKER: My name is Phil Tucker from
12 Bellingham.

13 Am I to understand from what you've said
14 that smolts released currently at Barnaby and
15 Marblemount would be replaced and then released
16 from Grandy Creek? And wouldn't that then limit
17 the catching of the -- the hatchery fish to
18 Grandy Creek and downstream?

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Let me see if I
20 understood your question correctly.

21 If I -- I might have said those wrong.
22 The production that's at Marblemount now and the
23 production that's at Barnaby Slough now will not
24 be eliminated as a result of constructing this
25 acclimation site. Okay? It will not be

1 eliminated.

2 In the final mix of how best to produce
3 the fish where, there might be some
4 modifications made in what is released where,
5 but right now there's -- we're still releasing
6 fish at three different sites. Two of them are
7 on station all the way up at Marblemount or at
8 Barnaby, and then dumping fish or hauling fish
9 down and planting them directly in the river at
10 the Grandy Creek area. That's what we're doing
11 now.

12 So the modifications to that would be
13 acclimating these fish instead of just putting
14 them directly in the river.

15 Does -- does that help answer you?

16 MR. TUCKER: Well, are you not releasing
17 fish at Marblemount now?

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes. And we would
19 continue to do that.

20 MR. TUCKER: You're going to -- but you're
21 going -- you're going to have five hundred and
22 thirty -- you would take away from Grandy Creek
23 and release them at Marblemount, at the --

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No. No. We're
25 producing all the fish at -- at -- at

1 Marblemount right now, initially, and then we're
2 putting some down for acclimation and release at
3 Barnaby. That's what we're doing now.

4 Some of the Marblemount fish are trucked
5 downstream and planted near Grandy Creek in the
6 lower river. Right now. That's what we're
7 doing. That's smolt. Okay. We wouldn't change
8 that. But we want to acclimate them instead of
9 just dumping them in the river. That's what
10 this project proposal is about.

11 Does that make sense?

12 MR. TUCKER: Well, I'm puzzled, but --

13 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, I'd like to make
14 sure that's clarified.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could you -- could
16 you chart that?

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I'll ask my -- Chuck
18 to help me with --

19 MR. LAVIER: What was the question? I'm
20 Chuck Lavier.

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: He's the manager for
22 these three hatcheries you're talking about.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could you put that
24 on a chart, what's being released as of 2002, or
25 what will be released at each of these sites and

1 what will be released in this proposal?

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: So Marblemount
3 releases how many smolts?

4 MR. LAVIER: Approximately 50 percent of
5 them -- or 25 percent are at Marblemount. These
6 are approximate numbers. Twenty-five percent at
7 Barnaby Slough, and 50 percent are hauled
8 downstream.

9 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Now, I want to
10 clarify -- thank you, Chuck.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Have they all been
12 acclimated into those particular locations?

13 (Multiple voices speaking at once.
14 Inaudible.)

15 THE COURT REPORTER: One at a time,
16 please.

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: One at a time.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They're developed
19 and acclimated, then, for those particular
20 locations?

21 MR. LAVIER: No.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They're just
23 released there.

24 MR. LAVIER: Marblemount and Barnaby
25 Slough are. The fish are reared there and

1 direct -- and released directly from there. The
2 fish from here are -- are hauled from here and
3 here downstream and just released into the
4 river. There's no acclimation down river now.

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Does that help?

6 Now, the reason for the percent is because
7 we haven't always met the 534-, you understand,
8 so we still break it out evenly, hopefully,
9 their production.

10 Okay. Thanks.

11 Yes, sir?

12 MR. DE YONGE: My name is John de Yonge.
13 I live in Sedro-Woolley, 8370 Skagit Wild Lane.

14 Assuming that -- I have two questions,
15 really. One, how will we know that if this
16 project is built there won't be an increase in
17 the number of fish finally released in the
18 Skagit from this operation? In other words, you
19 build one acclimation pond, maybe we'll build
20 two and so forth and increase the number of
21 actual fish produced. In other words, in
22 addition to the 534,000 fish. How do we know
23 that?

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, that's a very
25 good question. Policy makers could make

1 decisions that change that number beyond the
2 scope of what we're saying here today.

3 MR. DE YONGE: Okay.

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: You know.

5 MR. DE YONGE: So my related question is
6 how can we write an Environmental Impact
7 Statement on a project which -- for which we
8 really don't know what the numbers will be?
9 It's obviously going to make a difference
10 whether the acclimation pond releases a thousand
11 fish or releases 600,000 fish or whatever you
12 guys decide you're going to release.

13 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, if we go back to
14 this percentage breakout of mine, I left the
15 door open saying this number could change of
16 what's released at the site depending on how
17 well it can perform, what design we can actually
18 do and get in there at one of these sites down
19 there, and how u -- how -- how we can utilize
20 it. And that might change the number that
21 people want to release in the lower river.
22 Because that's where -- that's -- maybe that's
23 where the best harvest (inaudible), and the less
24 stray rate, less impact to wild stocks.

25 MR. DE YONGE: So the Environmental Impact

1 Statement, then, I assume, must examine right
2 now the effects of these releases if the project
3 is going to alter those releases. Is that not
4 true?

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Alter the releases --

6 MR. DE YONGE: It's going to be altering
7 where fish are now released. The number of fish
8 released at some point now are not going to be
9 released there. They would be -- all -- they
10 would be released at the acclimation pond --

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Correct.

12 MR. DE YONGE: -- as I understand it.

13 So the Environmental Impact Statement, the
14 scope of the Environmental Impact Statement
15 obviously must therefore deal with the
16 environmental impacts we have now in order to
17 compare with the environmental impact we have
18 afterwards, would it not?

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I'm not sure it would
20 be relative to have to compare what it's doing
21 now. I think one of the things that we know
22 that we're very interested in is to comply with
23 hatchery interactions, irrespective of trying to
24 do this in a full project. We have hatchery
25 issues we're trying to deal with now. We're

1 releasing hatchery fish that we know might have
2 impacts and evaluate -- and do something to
3 change or modify that.

4 The reason that this is an important
5 benefit, we -- we already know by pulling the
6 fish back out of the system at some point that
7 they're not going to be straying out and
8 interacting with the wild fish. We know that's
9 a benefit. We know that helps us with the
10 compliance issue under the ESI.

11 MR. DE YONGE: Let me follow that up.

12 As I understand it, no matter where you
13 release hatchery fish, a number of them will
14 stray. The number may vary, but no matter where
15 you release them, they stray.

16 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: The potential for that
17 exists, right.

18 MR. DE YONGE: Yes. Well, it's not a
19 potential.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: And -- and --

21 MR. DE YONGE: It's a scientific fact.

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Correct. But we do
23 know that wild fish that we mark do stray
24 between systems and (inaudible).

25 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. But we do

1 know?

2 MR. DE YONGE: Right. But the point is
3 the wild fish straying is the one that impacts
4 the wild fish, not the wild fish impacting wild
5 fish. It's the hatchery fish impacting the wild
6 fish.

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Agreed.

8 MR. DE YONGE: Is that not it?

9 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Agreed. That's
10 correct.

11 MR. DE YONGE: Okay. So my question,
12 then, is how can we do a scientific
13 Environmental Impact Statement on all of these
14 things without, A, knowing the total number of
15 release and the guarantee there would be no more
16 release, know what the impacts are now, and then
17 work and compare that with the impacts of this
18 project? How can we -- how can we write an
19 Environmental Impact Statement otherwise?

20 MS. PRATT: I need to address a little bit
21 something. If -- in my opinion, if they
22 increase the amount of production or the amount
23 of fish -- and I guess that I'm using a weasel
24 word "significantly," but then it seems to me
25 that has to be addressed either in a

1 supplemental or some kind of a way to address it
2 regardless. I mean, if -- if -- if it only it
3 increases it by one percent, I'm not sure if
4 that's a big deal, but if it ends up being
5 increased ten, 20, 30 percent, we certainly --
6 that could be significant. That would have to
7 be a supplemental.

8 MR. DE YONGE: Well, with all res -- with
9 all respect, even with one percent you're
10 talking significant numbers.

11 MS. PRATT: Yeah. Well, we're -- yeah. I
12 would have to figure out what one percent of
13 whatever it is is, but --

14 MR. DE YONGE: (Inaudible) under SEPA
15 the --

16 THE COURT REPORTER: I can't hear you sir,
17 I'm sorry.

18 MR. DE YONGE: I'm sorry. I was saying
19 that under SEPA, the action, which is the
20 Environmental Impact Statement, is to be written
21 it requires you to consider these
22 possibilities --

23 MS. PRATT: Exactly.

24 MR. DE YONGE: -- and include all these
25 things. It cannot be ignored. It cannot simply

1 be passed over with a paragraph.

2 MS. PRATT: And I think that can be looked
3 at what is it doing now as opposed to what would
4 be coming, what the change would be, and those
5 kinds of -- if any changes in policy occurs I
6 think that probably would have to be looked at.
7 So I -- if I understand you, you're assuming
8 that they have to do an EIS on what's current,
9 but I'm saying that what needs to be done is
10 deal with this issue here, but look at it as to
11 current conditions which may have some impacts,
12 but that has to be looked at, and then go on to
13 look at impacts of increasing any kind of
14 situation.

15 MR. DE YONGE: Well, if we don't know what
16 the impacts are now, how will we know what the
17 new impacts will be for the purposes of writing
18 the Environmental Impact Statement?

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I'm not sure -- I'm
20 not sure that we made the statement that we
21 don't know what the impacts are now. I don't
22 think we said that.

23 MR. DE YONGE: Well, those -- those
24 impacts then would be in the statement so that a
25 lay reader like me could understand them.

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: And they will -- like
2 Cynthia said, they will -- that consideration
3 will be covered. Those impacts will be in that
4 EIS. It has to be. I mean, the current
5 operation we have now, with respect to the
6 agency's own (inaudible) policy, the review by
7 the Hatchery Scientific Review Group, an
8 independent science panel that reviewed our
9 hatchery operations, they've already done the
10 Skagit Basin, they -- they saw fit to say that
11 our current production for our steelhead is
12 not -- is not a major impact to the existing
13 wild stocks the way it's managed, and the
14 harvest rate supply monitored to help remove it,
15 decrease its stray rate.

16 That being said, going back to the point I
17 made about if we can help further benefit that
18 by taking them out of the system, we help
19 further, you know, to ensure that the stray
20 rates are even minimized or hopefully
21 eliminated, that's where we want to go. That's
22 the compliance we want.

23 MS. PRATT: Does that help answer your
24 question?

25 MR. DE YONGE: Pardon?

1 MS. PRATT: Does that help answer your
2 question? And if not, be sure to put it down in
3 the comments there so that we make sure that --

4 MR. DE YONGE: Well, I -- I'm here
5 representing --

6 MS. PRATT: And you gave me --

7 MR. DE YONGE: -- the Steelhead Federation
8 of Fly Fishing which opposed the first project
9 entirely, as you know, and helped stop it, and
10 we're not in favor of this one either.

11 MS. PRATT: But you turned in comments;
12 right?

13 MR. DE YONGE: Right.

14 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

15 MR. RAISLER: Dick Raisler, 1494 Channel
16 Lane, La Conner, Washington.

17 Could you summarize kind of historic or
18 current state-of-the-art of the hatchery program
19 now? You know, what's the life of the hatchery,
20 what's the root stock and --

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Which hatchery is
22 that, sir?

23 MR. RAISLER: That would be the
24 Marblemount. That's where you're producing the
25 fish; right?

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: And Barnaby Slough?

2 MR. RAISLER: And Barnaby Slough.

3 And what -- like, what is the life of the
4 hatchery?

5 And then the second part of the question
6 would be do you see any modernization, or I
7 guess for lack of a better term, of the hatchery
8 model to maybe support wild stock more, use wild
9 stock as root stock, or what do you see as the
10 future of the hatchery system on the Skagit?

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Help clarify. When
12 you say wild stock, like recovery efforts or
13 using wild stock, is that salmon and steelhead
14 or is that specifically to steelhead?

15 MR. RAISLER: Well, we're talking about
16 steelhead.

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. Relative to
18 steelhead.

19 Agewise, the facilities, they've both been
20 there for quite a long time. I think the
21 Marblemount was built back in the --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: '46.

23 MR. JOHONSON: -- '46 or so. And it's
24 had -- it's undergone a lot of improvements,
25 even in my short tenure since '78, even up until

1 recently there's been improvements through
2 mitigation, obligations have come along to help
3 improve the site. It's probably got a 50-year
4 life or built for 50 years. With the
5 enhancement we've gone through probably in the
6 last 15 it's under 35 before.

7 Speaking about for continually looking at
8 ways to improve that depending on what the new
9 initiative, what the new program might be -- I'm
10 not an expert on Barnaby.

11 (Court reporter was interrupted.)

12 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: We've done a merger on
13 Barnaby Slough, made improvements there. It's
14 not a full facility. It's not a full hatchery.
15 It doesn't have a major incubation building. It
16 doesn't have a major spawning there that takes
17 place there that we rely upon. We do collect
18 adults to some degree, or try. It's more of a
19 rearing site that we try to currently work in
20 concert with the local watershed that exists
21 around there to provide over-wintering habitat
22 (inaudible) that, too.

23 Back to your question, your second
24 question, about working with wild stocks, I
25 didn't make this point earlier about the current

1 steelhead program that we have. Right now we
2 have a goal not to import any more eggs from
3 anywhere for the hatchery program, the hatchery
4 stock, that be it from Tokul Creek or Bogachiel
5 or wherever the egg stock might be. We're going
6 to take our own local root stock eggs and
7 continue that program and not import them.

8 I want to make it clear, that doesn't make
9 it a wild stock. It doesn't make it a late
10 wintertime wild stock by any stretch. However,
11 there is no proposal today to integrate those
12 two stocks. By that I mean go collect wild root
13 stocks in the river that's late timing versus
14 the earlier timing hatchery, and replace that.

15 That's not to say that couldn't be
16 something down the road that could be produced
17 and --and maybe fish management wants to look at
18 doing that then, but the Hatchery Division is
19 not making that proposal. I've not heard that
20 proposal come from the local entity from my
21 short tenure on the project here. That doesn't
22 say it couldn't happen, but right now -- and I
23 don't know the exact status of the egg return in
24 the late run (inaudible). I don't know that.

25 Rich. I'm sorry.

1 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Rich Johnson with the
2 Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Program.
3 And I just wanted to make a comment, going back
4 to what John de Yonge said, and maybe within the
5 EIS you should look at another alternative, and
6 that would be the elimination of hatchery
7 steelhead in the Skagit River, and what would
8 that affect be on -- upon the habitat on the
9 interaction with wild steelhead and whatever,
10 and -- and that would get at, I think, what John
11 was saying in terms of what are the effects of
12 what -- this we have today on that -- on the
13 river system versus if we were doing something
14 different, well, what if we didn't have those
15 steelhead in there at all, what would that mean
16 to the wild fishery and -- and the sport
17 fishery, and how can you manipulate that,
18 essentially, and would that be good, bad or
19 indifferent. So that would be another
20 alternative.

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes, sir?

22 MR. McMILLAN: Bill McMillan,
23 Sedro-Woolley.

24 To follow up on that, I -- I -- I'm
25 surprised that there hasn't been more discussion

1 of what the primary limiting factor has actually
2 been to steelhead fishing opportunity in the
3 last couple of years. It has primarily been
4 because of the lack of wild steelhead which has
5 significantly reduced fishing opportunity and
6 is -- and has curtailed the ability to even
7 harvest the wild steelhead.

8 It would seem that that might be an
9 important alternative, is to address what would
10 primarily benefit wild steelhead as the limiting
11 factor to steelhead fishing opportunity in the
12 Skagit River.

13 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. I think that's
14 a statement, not a question.

15 MR. McMILLAN: Well, as part of that, for
16 instance, Grandy Creek property, isn't there
17 some other alternative other than (inaudible)
18 rearing pond if we made use of that? For
19 instance, the ground water channel project such
20 as -- as there is on Constant Creek on the upper
21 Sauk River which addresses the needs of multiple
22 species rather than singling out a single
23 species.

24 It seems like oftentimes biologically when
25 you work on programs to single out individual

1 species for prioritization oftentimes you end up
2 missing the point biologically. It appears as
3 though there's other opportunities for -- for
4 the Grandy Creek site, and -- and I'm wondering
5 if any of those have been explored as part of
6 the alternatives?

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't think this one
8 has been explored. We'll definitely capture it
9 here as an option to look at.

10 As Cynthia made a statement earlier about
11 a no-action, I guess that could be in the
12 category of a no-action, but something that
13 was -- this proposal deals with hatchery
14 steelhead for harvest opportunity, as opposed to
15 enhancements for wild fish. I don't want to
16 confuse the two. I don't want to mix that up
17 because that's not what this proposal is about.
18 I hear -- I hear what you're saying. We
19 definitely hear that. Okay?

20 Yes.

21 MR. MCGOWAN: What is the possibility of
22 closing the Barnaby facility and --

23 THE COURT REPORTER: Can you identify
24 yourself, please?

25 MR. MCGOWAN: Jeff McGowan, Skagit County.

1 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Can you say that
3 again, Jeff?

4 MR. MCGOWAN: The possibility of closing
5 Barnaby, turning it back into a natural rearing
6 facility.

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I'll be careful here.

8 With respect to this process, we're not --
9 we haven't proposed as -- internally for the
10 discussions of what we're trying to do with this
11 acclimation site, we're not proposing to stop
12 the operation of the property. I'll go back to
13 what I said earlier about we still need all
14 three -- we see all three sites as being a
15 viable way to meet the production goals that
16 we've stated that we want to continue and
17 achieve from the agency, and that's the 535,000
18 hatchery smolts at this time.

19 So I don't think we can do that. I don't
20 think we want to build a superstructure
21 somewhere to account for all of it, necessarily,
22 and then with the prognosis we're going to
23 eliminate that. We need that as a viable site
24 at this time.

25 That doesn't -- doesn't mean -- that

1 doesn't -- that doesn't mean that's something
2 that the agency down the road is going to plan,
3 you know, plan for and see as a priority and
4 maybe phase into that, out of that, or do
5 something else. Currently it wasn't on our
6 screen.

7 MS. PRATT: Were you suggesting that as an
8 alternative?

9 MR. MCGOWAN: Well, it could be, in lieu
10 of having to make Grandy Creek more appealing,
11 to eliminate Barnaby Slough. You know, Barnaby
12 Slough, everybody knows, has issues with it.
13 You know, it's not the best facility for rearing
14 fish to begin with.

15 MS. PRATT: As a mitigation.

16 MR. MCGOWAN: Well, as probably a program
17 decision, you know, and the issue of inner
18 species.

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Utilization of the
20 habitat?

21 MR. MCGOWAN: Competition.

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

23 MR. TINGLEY: A couple things. I'm
24 hearing --

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Your name?

1 MR. TINGLEY: Oh, excuse me. Ron Tingley,
2 10250 Ridge Place, Sedro-Woolley.

3 I'm hearing the fly fisherman folks talk
4 about the wild fish and how that provides
5 opportunity. Well, the purpose of this project
6 is to fight -- is to provide fishing opportunity
7 for the sportsmen. If one percent only of the
8 hatchery fish that's proposed to be planted in
9 the river come back, that produces more fish
10 than the whole wild run this last year. So --
11 and those are to be caught.

12 So as far as an opportunity, the hatchery
13 fish provide more of a fishing opportunity to
14 sportsmen than those wild fish do in this river
15 at the present time.

16 Another thing about Barnaby Slough,
17 closing Barnaby Slough, right now Bar -- Barnaby
18 Slough configuration, the fish rearing is done
19 in an earthen area that's been segregated from
20 the rest of Barnaby Slough. There is a fish
21 passageway into Harrison Pond already there, and
22 there's fish that have been getting into Barnaby
23 Slough other than the little area that's
24 relegated for fish rearing.

25 So I don't see a need to -- to get rid of

1 another site that has capture facilities there
2 for those returning adults that -- you know,
3 that is really beneficial to the wild hatchery
4 interaction.

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. Don?

6 MR. COLLEN: Don Collen. What is my home
7 address? 22299 Cully Road, Sedro-Woolley.

8 I'd just like to make a point of order
9 here. Aren't we kind of wandering from the
10 actual topic that we're -- I mean, we're off on
11 the Marblemount and Barnaby and we're not really
12 targeting the draft EIS or the input for this
13 particular thing.

14 I don't know. Maybe I'm off base, but I
15 just --

16 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, I don't think
17 we've wandered too far. I think we're still on
18 the idea that I keep coming back to. We're
19 trying to meet the -- our production goals of
20 534,000. This proposal helps us achieve that
21 and helps us comply more with wild fish
22 interactions under the ESA. That's -- I want to
23 be real clear about that.

24 So talking about Marblemount and
25 understanding the relationships, there is a

1 relationship between the sites, and that's --
2 and I want to be clear in answering Jeff's
3 questions that we in hatcheries, or at least
4 from Larry Peck, assistant director, and --
5 deputy assistant director, and Jeff Keenings
6 (phonetic), is saying we're not looking at
7 closing any facilities in this basin as a result
8 of this proposed project.

9 MS. PRATT: Did you have some additional
10 things to add specifically to the EIS?

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Does that help?

12 MR. TINGLEY: Yes, it did.

13 Well, yes, I -- I've gone through the era
14 of -- of Grandy Creek hatchery proposal and this
15 one also, and I -- I think the topic here, the
16 what-if philosophy is used way too much. She
17 brought that up to me and I agree.

18 But I -- I look at this project, and first
19 of all, the moneys are for this
20 acclimation/rearing pond or whatever, and that's
21 all it's for. There's no alternative. I mean,
22 that's -- that's it. And that's according to
23 the budget, and that's also according to Senator
24 Harry Spinnel which I just got off the phone
25 with.

1 But we have items there that are just
2 absolutely fantastic for us. We have water,
3 both surface and ground, that is there already,
4 and it's nonsignificant to any flow that's
5 around there because it just comes out and it
6 goes right back into the system. The draw down
7 on that 30-inch casing was very minimal.
8 Definitely not significant. We have the people
9 around that area that are not anti to it or
10 anything else. In fact, they're favorable to
11 it. They want it there.

12 So I don't think we have any noise or --
13 or antis from the people around there in that
14 particular situation. I -- I don't know. I
15 just -- I've gone through this thing, well, it's
16 been 12 years now, and I listen to these same
17 what-ifs, and I -- I mean, I get to the point of
18 where these are supplying fish for these very
19 people. I mean, they are actually a sports fish
20 there, and they're catching them and having fun
21 with them.

22 It's been shown in what the studies have
23 in the past that there's absolutely
24 non-significant effects on any of the other gene
25 pools. We're not increasing the amount. We're

1 just disbursing them further down river which is
2 a plus plus for that.

3 That's about all I've got to say. I
4 just -- I just don't understand where some of
5 the people are coming from. That's all.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have a question.
7 Will the ponds proposed at Grandy Creek block
8 the creek?

9 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No, it will not.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There will be no
11 blockage of the creek?

12 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No, it will not.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And so how do you
14 collect?

15 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Volunteers.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Huh?

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Volunteers. Put a
18 ladder in. Volunteer. That's how they collect
19 them at Marblemount now. That's how we collect
20 them at Barnaby. That's how we collect them at
21 Tokul Creek. Steelhead home very, very well to
22 their -- if they're acclimated properly. They
23 have great success at pulling high -- high
24 numbers of -- percentages of fish out.

25 Tokul Creek, for instance, is a great

1 example. It's a half mile or less of habitat
2 right above the hatchery. I don't think
3 there's -- I bet you couldn't count on the back
4 of your hand how many are -- one hand how many
5 stray. There's -- a significant number come
6 back.

7 One of the reasons for that is strong
8 homing as well as the longer term acclimation.
9 And in the case of where you can provide
10 extensive opportunity on those fish at that
11 terminal area where you've got them captivated
12 (inaudible). You can exact -- exact pretty
13 high -- high harvest rates. By high, I mean 70
14 percent -- sorry -- 70 percent or more is not
15 exaggerated for steelhead in a hatchery setting
16 like that, for hatchery return and you can get
17 at them.

18 So that's kind of what we're proposing.
19 We're not proposing to block the stream off,
20 and -- and I don't know that that stream would
21 let you block it off, per se. So I'm not
22 excited about doing that.

23 Yes.

24 MR. RIPLEY: Excuse my scratchy voice.

25 Todd Ripley, Samish.

1 A question about expecting volunteers to
2 go up the Hatchery Creek after they go up Grandy
3 Creek. Maybe you answered this question
4 earlier. I wasn't very clear. What percentage
5 do you expect to be volunteers and what
6 percentage do you expect to bypass the hatchery
7 creek and continue up Grandy Creek?

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't want to
9 speculate. I -- less than five percent stray.
10 Less than one percent. Some range of a small
11 percentage. And when I mean stray, I'm not
12 talking about 50 miles up the Skagit. Let me
13 make that clear. I'm talking if they strayed up
14 Grandy Creek, for instance, I'm talking within
15 the vicinity of the hatchery. Real close by.
16 They just -- these -- these fish have shown that
17 everywhere. This stock that was developed years
18 ago in the seventies at -- at Chambers Creek
19 hatchery, this early timing return rate and
20 early time spawn, if you will, of this hatchery
21 stock homes very well. It has a strong urge to
22 come into the facility. Not a lot of strays.

23 And one thing that the studies we've done,
24 the agency has done, to look at when they do
25 stray and they spawn, they spawn much earlier

1 than -- than the late timing, most late timing,
2 March, April, May, even June wild steelhead
3 hatchery -- excuse me, wild winter steelhead.
4 The success rate on fish that spawn in December
5 is extremely low. You've seen what rivers look
6 like in December around here. Kind of the wrong
7 time to be spawning if you're a steelhead. And
8 January is not much better in some cases.

9 So that depresses whatever -- whatever is
10 out there, it does depress their numbers to a
11 certain degree, and it -- and it selects against
12 them, obviously.

13 Now, if they were -- if you left them
14 alone, I don't know, maybe somebody that knows
15 better than I about life history of -- of some
16 of these species -- I suppose if they're going
17 to survive at all in nature and they went out
18 there, they're going -- in 50 years or a hundred
19 years they're going to look like the wild stocks
20 that spawned back in the springtime.

21 Decreasing flow is increasing light.
22 That's what trout do. Salmon do -- salmon spawn
23 on the other end. Decreasing temperature and
24 light and increasing flows.

25 MR. RIPLEY: Thanks.

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: You're welcome.

2 Yes, sir?

3 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Kevin Kratochvil, 38730
4 Cape Horn Road, Concrete. I guess my question
5 deals more with people than it does with fish,
6 and I'm asking if you have any -- anticipate any
7 public access or increased river access in the
8 area of Grandy Creek?

9 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: At this time I don't
10 know of increased access to the river itself.
11 The public will have -- most likely have access
12 to the site when it's in operation, just like we
13 do at other sites. We have them open during the
14 work hours and closed at night. So in terms of
15 that public, it would be open to public stopping
16 by and viewing the site, but not to provide --
17 direct access to provide a boat launch or
18 fishing access?

19 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Right.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't know that
21 we're intending to increase that or deal with
22 that under this proposal, no.

23 MR. KRATOCHVIL: There will be a parking
24 lot or something involved?

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yeah. There should be

1 a parking lot at the grounds and the public can
2 park there, if that's provided access to the
3 trails (inaudible). I'm assuming that would go
4 hand in hand.

5 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Sure. I represent the
6 Washington State Parks.

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. Oh, okay.

8 MR. KRATOCHVIL: I just live downstream
9 from there.

10 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I just talked to your
11 supervisor today.

12 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Oh, okay.

13 And I can see in the future some kind of
14 a --

15 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Sure. Connectivity.

16 MR. KRATOCHVIL: -- connectivity between
17 the parks and the hatchery.

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: The agency has always
19 been good about working with that at the
20 facilities that provides an opportunity.

21 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Sure. Thanks.

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes, sir?

23 MR. RAISLER: Dick Raisler again. I'd
24 like to address the -- the fishing atmosphere at
25 Grandy Creek. And last year there were more

1 hatchery fish holding in the mouth of Grandy
2 Creek, you know, because of the implanting
3 that's taking place. And it's the nature of
4 these fish to quickly swim up the river,
5 congregate in a tight, small area at the mouth
6 of Grandy Creek. And if there's five bank
7 fishermen and three drift boats in the area you
8 have a congested fishing condition. You have a
9 combat fishing condition.

10 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Is that an official
11 term?

12 MR. RAISLER: And it seems like having an
13 imprinting pond at Grandy Creek would def --
14 would increase the number of fish holding in
15 this small area, which would increase the
16 fishing pressure, which would make tempers fly.
17 You know, I think we -- what we would have is
18 like a Blue Creek, Cowlitz -- Cowlitz River
19 situation, and to me that -- you know, that's a
20 detrimental aspect of fishing, is creating
21 situations like that.

22 So as an alternative I would suggest we
23 build a boxing ring right next to the holding
24 pond and supply boxing gloves.

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Did you get that?

1 MR. RAISLER: But, you know, I think
2 that's a serious consideration for not
3 increasing the fishing pressure in this small
4 area.

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Thank you.

6 MR. COLLEN: Don Collen again.

7 I think he's actually turning things
8 around. The more fishing facilities we have,
9 the less congestion we have, the less of this
10 combative-type thing like Samish River and so
11 on. I think what we're looking at is we need
12 more of these, you know, different places. Not
13 necessarily on the Skagit. I'm talking about we
14 need more fishing aspects throughout the state.
15 And yet if we start eliminating like this one
16 right here, we're -- we're trying to eliminate
17 fish, why, we're eliminating the very answer,
18 you know, of more fishing places where we can
19 disburse.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes, sir?

21 MR. BEE: My name is Gary Bee. I'm from
22 Monroe.

23 I just heard -- I'm sorry I'm a little bit
24 late. Are there any tribal members here? I
25 mean, this is a -- you know, you're promoting a

1 harvest issue here, I assume.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: We have met -- I can
3 help answer that question. I don't know, is
4 there any tribal members here, just to clarify?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't see any.

6 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Nobody is
7 acknowledging.

8 The deputy director and myself came to
9 Mount Vernon months past and met directly with
10 the tribe regarding this proposal and the intent
11 of the agency to move forward with this
12 acclimation site. And the co-managers at that
13 time were -- you know, listened intently and
14 didn't see where that represented a major change
15 to their current opportunity, their current
16 right.

17 MR. BEE: I understand that.

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Right.

19 MR. BEE: But half is half.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, half is half,
21 but also we're still distributing fish similar
22 to what we're proposing to do, at least
23 initially, I guess, in that -- when this -- if
24 the site's built, or if a site's built.

25 MR. BEE: Okay.

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: So -- so yes, we have
2 talked to the tribe.

3 MS. PRATT: Also -- also, just for your
4 information, they did receive the scoping notice
5 because it was sent to the tribal members as
6 well.

7 MR. BEE: Very good.

8 So say, you know, best case scenario for
9 recreational fishers, you know, if this thing
10 went through and we -- we get much more
11 production into the Skagit system in the lower
12 end, the tribes, of course, harvest their share,
13 which they're co-managers and I understand that.
14 That's very well and good. Now, would they
15 lay off the -- the late run? Or would they take
16 half of that, too? I mean, how does all this
17 work? You know, I mean --

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't know the
19 answer to your question.

20 MR. BEE: They -- they -- They're
21 interested in the harvest.

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I tell you what. I --
23 I agree. I think there are people in this room
24 that know more than I about the management of
25 the steelhead in the Skagit River, from a

1 management standpoint.

2 MR. BEE: I understand that.

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay? I'm in the
4 Hatchery Division. I've got a lot of expertise
5 in hatcheries, but I -- but I know that when
6 they -- when you manage early times winter steel
7 hatchery fish with the co-managers from the
8 tribe, it's a lot different than saying the
9 management of the wild run itself. They don't
10 necessarily, the tribes, have to go out and have
11 the right to harvest in the same manner or do
12 they propose to in the some way, but I don't --
13 I don't -- I don't know exactly how the modeling
14 goes and the setting of the seasons goes for
15 both non-indians and -- and the tribes itself.

16 MR. BEE: Well, don't you see that as a
17 problem probably here?

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No, I do not. Because
19 we're not increasing the numbers of smolts
20 totally. We're not increasing that right now.
21 So that -- if we did generate more returning
22 adults as a result of the project, if we had
23 more come back to the terminal area, it would
24 just mean that their share and hopefully the
25 non-indians' share as well gets increased as a

1 result of that. That would be -- that -- that's
2 our goal. One of the goals.

3 So that being said, I'm not sure how that
4 might translate to impact to the wild fish. I
5 can't even speculate what that would be since
6 I'm not in that arena, the management, and I
7 don't know exactly what it is now.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Now, escapement
9 goal for the wild fish is 6,000 fish in the
10 Skagit River. So if there's a predicted return
11 above the 6,000 fish, the tribes would be able
12 to fish on 50 percent of whatever that figure
13 was.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, but early or
15 late --

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That would be
17 negotiated with the fish managers in December
18 before that season starts. So those fish are
19 late time, and so they would be fished in the
20 later months of the season. It wouldn't be at
21 the same time as the hatchery fish.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, my point is
23 why not force the tribes to fish on the early
24 part of this because they're artificially, you
25 know, derived.

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Right. But --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They, you know --
3 they can, you know, use a trap or a fish wheel
4 and let the wild fish alone.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, they could do
6 that, but it's their option.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They have the
9 option to fish -- if there's wild harvestable
10 fish in the system, they have the option to fish
11 them. If they want to they can take those in
12 hatchery fish, but they still have that option
13 on the wild fish.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So if we increase
15 hatchery production on the one end, we don't
16 want to hurt the wild fish on the other end.
17 That's all I'm --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That will have no
19 effect because they're entirely figured
20 differently. The escapement goals for hatchery
21 and the escapement goals for wild are figured
22 separately, and the harvestable amounts of each
23 one of those caught are set individually and not
24 together.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Well, I -- I

1 thought that, like, the Skagit used to be at,
2 like, 8- or 10,000, and then it dropped down to
3 6-.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where did that come
6 from?

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It was through
8 negotiations between the department and the
9 tribe.

10 THE COURT REPORTER: Can I get your name,
11 please, sir?

12 MR. TINGLEY: Ron Tingley.

13 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

14 MR. RIPLEY: Todd Ripley again. I think
15 this gentleman's point is very good. We're
16 going to create a very high-pressure terminal
17 fishery if we relo -- reallocate all these fish
18 to the lower river, and there's no doubt that's
19 going to happen.

20 Is there going to be an increase in
21 enforcement for the increase in people that are
22 going to be fishing in that area? Because that
23 seems to be the big problem with all these
24 people, is lack of enforcement. And even
25 (inaudible) is there -- is there any plans for

1 increasing enforcement present on the Skagit
2 River if we're going to concentrate the
3 fishermen and fish?

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, let me start by
5 saying that --

6 THE COURT REPORTER: Can you come over
7 here, please? I'm sorry.

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: -- we're not moving --
9 we're not moving -- no. That's alright.

10 We're not moving all the fish down to
11 Grandy Creek for this proposed acclimation site.
12 We're not going to move all the fish down there.
13 So we're not trying to increase this overall big
14 fishery that might have this combat zone. And
15 I'll -- I'll agree. I'm going to be the first
16 one to say that I've been to Blue Creek myself.
17 I've been to both places. That just -- that
18 comes with fish -- hatchery fish returning to a
19 specific site. You have to. You can't get away
20 from it.

21 The alternative to that, it's not even in
22 compliance, it's even a worse issue dealing with
23 wild fish interaction, is by planting them all
24 over and spreading them out. So we don't want
25 to do that. We're not proposing to do that.

1 That's not even an option.

2 So the second part of your question was?

3 MR. RIPLEY: Well, are you saying there's
4 not -- there's not going to be an increased
5 return to Grandy Creek compared to what there is
6 now?

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: There might be an
8 increase -- as a result of planting the same
9 number -- and as I say, we're hoping that
10 through that management and producing good
11 smolts that we can actually increase the return
12 rates. Albeit we're not doubling. We're saying
13 we're increasing to some number, and maybe
14 having it be at a higher level than it was in
15 the past, but it's not going to be a huge
16 number.

17 So will it -- will it specifically change
18 how people fish? I doubt it. If all the fish
19 end up in a little spot and that's where they're
20 going to be most available -- and you're going
21 to see some of that occur every year. It
22 doesn't mean that people have accessed some of
23 these fish before they get there. That hasn't
24 been spoken to. I mean, there's a lot of river
25 between the mouth of Grandy Creek and the mouth

1 of the Skagit. So I'm assuming there's some
2 area in there that people harvest these fish
3 besides the very terminal spot. So some of that
4 harvest is going to take place in that range,
5 and we -- and -- and that's what we want to see.

6 So I hope -- I mean, I hope that answers
7 that question. Again, we can't make the combat
8 zone go away. We can't manage that away. We
9 can management the people that come there the
10 best we can, through enforcement, set that up,
11 you know, at certain times when it's needed,
12 write tickets, bust people.

13 MR. RIPLEY: That was my question. Is
14 there a plan -- are there plans to do that?

15 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No, but I don't know
16 why they wouldn't. We do it now at sites. We
17 have -- we have to manage those sites when they
18 exist for the few weeks or months that they
19 exist.

20 Yes.

21 MR. BEE: Gary Bee again.

22 Are all of the fish coming out of the
23 proposed hatchery going to be marked?

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes.

25 MR. BEE: 100 percent?

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: 100 percent. They are
2 now. All hatchery steelhead planted in the
3 State of Washington from the hatchery system --

4 MR. BEE: I understand that. Okay. So
5 from a harvest issue, then, there should be a
6 selected fishery coming back where you could
7 pick from marked fish and wild fish via adipose
8 fins; right?

9 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Correct. Yes.

10 MR. BEE: Are the tribes going to be
11 favorable to harvesting selectively rather than
12 gill nets, maybe traps or fish wheels or
13 something like that?

14 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: If they choose to, I
15 suppose so, but right now they choose not to.

16 MR. BEE: And they're co-managers.

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: They -- well, the
18 tribes are -- co-managers or not, the tribes
19 fish in their traditional way. They're allowed
20 to fish in their traditional way.

21 MR. BEE: Well, I think we have to -- you
22 know, we should not --

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: But we -- but I don't
24 want to deviate about -- okay. I would like to
25 stay on focus. Now, this is getting -- that's

1 getting a little off track. I appreciate the
2 question. That's a fair question. However, I'm
3 not going to be able to change that. I'm not a
4 fishery manager, and the director would stand
5 here and tell you the same thing.

6 The co-managers have a right to harvest
7 with gill nets, terminally or in the salt
8 brackish or wherever they fish. They have that
9 right to fish in a traditional way. And we're
10 not -- we're encouraging them to look at
11 opportunities. It's being discussed now.

12 That being said, I would like to stay
13 focused on this subject. Thank you.

14 MR. BEE: Just we're -- you know, we're
15 introducing a whole new harvest availability,
16 and I thought maybe, you know, they should --

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yeah. Sure.

18 MR. BEE: -- acknowledge the fact that
19 there's more opportunity now.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: And maybe that will
21 happen in the future, sir. Maybe that will
22 happen. That would be great.

23 Yes, sir.

24 MR. POOLMAN: I'm Lyle Poolman again. I'd
25 just like to quickly respond to my friend Dick's

1 comment, who I know personally to be a gentleman
2 and a scholar, in regards to the crowding there.
3 I would suggest that as a fly fisherman takes so
4 much room, that they just establish a
5 one-fly-fisherman-to-eight-bank-fishermen ratio.
6 Now, I'm -- no. No. Seriously, I --

7 (Many people speaking at once.
8 Inaudible.)

9 MR. POOLMAN: Seriously, I think that
10 would be a real weak reason not to do the Grandy
11 Creek. I mean, there's so many ways to address
12 that. Close it for a hundred yards both ways at
13 the mouth. Put in some ac -- increased access
14 at the mouth. But although that's a reason, I
15 think it's weak one. Sorry, Dick.

16 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Thank you.

17 Yes, sir?

18 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Rich Johnson.

19 I -- I'd suggest that as another
20 alternative there in the EIS that you look at
21 eliminating planting the steelhead in the lower
22 river. And I suggest that for two reasons.
23 No. 1 is because it's having an adverse
24 interaction with the wild steelhead in the lower
25 river system. It's severely depressed right

1 now.

2 And No. 2 is the fact that the returns on
3 the hatchery fish are, frankly, abysmal, and the
4 opportunity to harvest those fish is -- is
5 extremely poor in the Skagit River right now.
6 And the best way to maximize your catch per
7 effort is to get all those fish to come back to
8 a couple areas instead of spreading them out
9 across a really large river like the Skagit.
10 Your opportunity to catch those fish is much
11 better if it comes back to either Barnaby Slough
12 or -- or to the Cascade River than to have them
13 spread throughout the river system.

14 And -- and I think that's the goal, is to
15 maximize the ability of fishermen to catch those
16 hatchery fish and you don't do that by
17 concentrating those fisheries.

18 MR. STOCKING: Cal Stocking with Cause for
19 Divorce Guide Services. I -- I came in a little
20 bit late so I don't know what was totally
21 discussed so far, but on his comments there, one
22 reason hatchery fish are there, they're put in
23 the river for the sportsmen to catch.

24 MS. PRATT: Can you speak up?

25 MR. STOCKING: Those fish are placed in

1 the river for sportsmen to catch and for the
2 indians to also have their fishery. As we found
3 out, we really can't do much of how the indians
4 catch the fish. We really can't control what
5 they do. But I'd like to take a look at the big
6 picture of the economic impact for the economy
7 of these fish returning to the river. A lot of
8 people kind of overlook that.

9 When these fish come back -- I have
10 clients that come from all over the United
11 States to fish in the Skagit River, and they
12 spend a lot of money here in the economy, from
13 hotel rooms to the local convenience stores to
14 restaurants. And it is a nonstop process. That
15 money creates jobs. The more fish that we can
16 have come back to this river every year -- this
17 river used to be a world class fishery. You
18 look at it back in the sixties, the early
19 seventies, and look at the influx of people that
20 showed up to our county to catch these fish.
21 That's a great impact. And right now, with the
22 economy the way it is, we need all those people
23 we can get in our local economy.

24 I spend a lot of money around here with
25 the money I make from my clients, and I think we

1 need to look at that picture also.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Excellent point.

3 Thank you.

4 Yes, sir?

5 MR. KURSCHNER: James Kurschner, Everett,
6 Washington.

7 Is there any -- has anybody thought about
8 putting summer fish in, summer run steelhead?

9 Now, I know that's going to throw a curve
10 into the whole thing, but it sure beats fishing
11 in the -- in the rain. I mean, look at the
12 Skykomish --

13 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: What -- here's --
14 here's how I answer that question.

15 MR. KURSCHNER: Look at the Skykomish.

16 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yeah. Okay. Look at
17 the Cowlitz. Look at the Lewis River. Look at
18 the Bogachiel. Yeah.

19 MS. FISCHER: (Inaudible) fish.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: That isn't -- that
21 isn't part of this proposal. Make that clear.

22 MR. KURSCHNER: What was that? I heard
23 somebody say something about what kind of fish?
24 I heard somebody pipe up about a fish.

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

1 MR. KURSCHNER: I was kind of curious what
2 the --

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: We don't have --
4 currently we're not proposing to introduce or
5 reestablish or whatever any summer-run steelhead
6 in the -- from a hatchery standpoint, in the
7 system. If -- if you were serious about that,
8 you know --

9 MR. KURSCHNER: Well, certainly.

10 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: -- proposal this
11 wouldn't be the forum for it, but -- but feel
12 free, you know, to make contact with -- Chuck
13 Phillips is the regional fish program manager in
14 Region 4 office in Mill Creek, and I would
15 suggest you contact -- either that or Pete
16 Castle locally, if you choose to, but, you know,
17 that's how some of these programs get
18 established -- or years ago, and how they've
19 been maintained, is through folks like yourself,
20 you know, making that effort to --

21 MR. KURSCHNER: Well, I take it that
22 nobody likes fishing in the summertime up here
23 for steelhead like that?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, that's not
25 true.

1 MR. KURSCHNER: Well, I know, but I just
2 don't -- I just --

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But there is a
4 small amount of summer runs planted in the
5 Cascade every year. But right now the
6 co-managers cannot agree on adding to any of the
7 summer-run fish, so that's the problem.

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yeah. It's -- there's
9 a lot of history on that, at least between the
10 co-managers and the agency in past management
11 issues and hatchery practices versus wild
12 management.

13 Again, I don't claim to be an expert on
14 why summer runs don't exist here as a hatchery
15 program where they've been established in other
16 areas, such as the Sky, for instance, except
17 it's just not here.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's the tribe.

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes, sir?

20 MR. McMILLAN: Bill McMillan again,
21 Sedro-Woolley.

22 Dick Raisler asked a question early on
23 about the reliability of being able to depend on
24 the continuation of the Marblemount Hatchery.

25 Related to that, why, again, it seems like

1 it's an important point, that essentially it's
2 any -- if any hatchery oriented rearing pond is
3 going to work it's going to be dependent upon a
4 rearing facility to begin with. Marblemount
5 Hatchery is one of the 38 hatcheries identified
6 in the state that are in noncompliance with
7 state laws with regards to passage of anadromous
8 fish into the tributaries that are adjacent to
9 Jordon Creek and Clark Creek.

10 If -- where is the state going to get the
11 money to make those 38 hatcheries come into
12 compliance? Twenty of those hatcheries are on
13 streams that have ESA listed fish and are
14 denying access to ESA listed fish. Where is the
15 state going to come up with the money?

16 They're having a difficult time coming up
17 with \$300,000 for Grandy Creek. To provide --
18 are we just going to end up with a hole in the
19 ground and no facility to continue providing a
20 source of fish to a hole in the ground?

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't think that's
22 the case. I wouldn't -- I wouldn't go there.
23 And trying to keep this focused on what the
24 purpose of the meeting is, it's to talk about
25 the proposed project, but I will answer relative

1 to the connection to Marblemount and its
2 support, your point's well taken, is that --
3 that was well taken about it is the mother
4 station. We want to use that facility as the
5 primary support for egg take goals, incubation,
6 early rearing and distribution to these
7 acclimation sites so they can have some control
8 on disease issues, have a good stock, have it
9 locally adapted, if you will, in the hatchery
10 product, not importing stock to decrease or
11 impact in the wild stocks. We want -- we
12 wanted to do that.

13 MR. McMILLAN: How do you do that if you
14 don't first get the hatchery in compliance?
15 Are -- are -- are -- for the next ten years or
16 for the next 15 years or the next 30 years are
17 you going to rear fish that are going to be more
18 adverse to wild steelhead into the Skagit
19 system?

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No. I don't have
21 anything on our radar screen that tells us that
22 the hatchery is going to close as a result of
23 your comment about the compliance issue. I
24 don't see that happening. I don't -- I don't
25 see that as an issue for this process to even

1 worry about at this point. I really don't. I
2 know there are -- are factions out there that
3 are concerned about this compliance. And
4 believe me, our agency has been working on this
5 issue and developing this list and -- and
6 dealing with it for a long. Not just this last
7 year. For a long time.

8 You talked about economy. The state has
9 an economy problem. The governor has an economy
10 problem. You know, we have to compete for funds
11 to do these things just like everybody else
12 does, ESA (inaudible) or any other issues.

13 So -- but I'm not worried about that. I'm
14 not -- I'm not concerned that this hatchery is
15 going to be targeted as a result of that. There
16 are ways that we can deal with the small issues
17 we've got on Jordon Creek and/or Clark Creek to
18 try to mitigate or make that work in the
19 interim. Even a provisional (inaudible). I'm
20 sure -- I'm confident that we can come up with a
21 plan to do that without spending millions of
22 dollars and having the Corps people get involved
23 to fix it.

24 Some of the habitats we've talked about,
25 the Jordan Creek is pretty limited in its use.

1 You've seen Jordon Creek and what the habitat
2 looks like at times out there. It's not the
3 best, but we're not -- we're not saying that we
4 don't still want to have it utilized and -- and
5 get fish in it when it's -- when it's there.
6 Currently we operate only part of the year
7 utilizing that water. The rest of the year it's
8 open, even though there's some water flow
9 issues.

10 So yeah, I'm -- I'm very confident that
11 the hatchery is not going to be impacted by the
12 issues dealing with the compliance. There --
13 there will be some solutions to that coming
14 forth, I'm sure, in -- in recent times here,
15 soon. And at the federal level and state I'm
16 very confident that will occur.

17 MS. PRATT: One of the things, I don't
18 know whether it's important to mention, but the
19 entire building of anything still needs to be
20 funded. We are doing an EIS. We have funding
21 for that.

22 So just so you know we're -- we don't
23 have -- the legislature -- we'd have to still go
24 back to the legislature to make sure that the
25 rest of any implementation gets --

1 MR. MCGOWAN: Isn't this contingent on
2 some kind of local entity also?

3 MS. PRATT: I don't know. It might be.

4 MR. MCGOWAN: I think I read that
5 somewhere.

6 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: It's not (inaudible),
7 no. If there is a proposal for that, it's
8 approved if available, but it's not contingent
9 upon it. Okay?

10 That was Jeff McGowan.

11 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

12 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: He didn't say his
13 name.

14 MR. MCGOWAN: Thank you very little.

15 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes?

16 MR. RIPLEY: Todd Ripley again.

17 As I understand it, the last time this
18 proposal didn't get off the ground it was due to
19 failures in the EIS to address the wild/hatchery
20 interactions. What is happening this time
21 that's going to hopefully get over that hump?

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, one of the
23 things that's different right away is that it's
24 not a hatchery. It's not a full-blown hatchery.

25 The other is that we're going to consider

1 all the alternatives, as I said earlier. We're
2 not looking to back down from any options that
3 make this successful that are better than the
4 idea that we're proposing.

5 MR. RIPLEY: One of the -- one of the
6 options that wasn't considered last time is no
7 action on the EIS; right?

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: That's going to be --
9 no action will be on this evaluation as well.

10 MR. RIPLEY: All right.

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Chuck?

12 MR. TINGLEY: Just for clarification --

13 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Say your name.

14 MR. TINGLEY: Ron Tingley.

15 The other EIS did not fail because of
16 genetic interaction. It failed because there
17 was a list of sites, different alternative sites
18 were not --

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: That's correct. Yeah.

20 MR. TINGLEY: It wasn't anything to do
21 with genetic interaction because that was
22 addressed in the first EIS.

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I believe that was the
24 challenge that -- the court challenge that was
25 levied against that -- that former EIS.

1 MR. STOCKING: Cal Stocking again.

2 On this interaction issue, as much time as
3 I spend on the river, as many fish as I catch,
4 the percentage that I would see -- and I don't
5 have scientific evidence here to prove this, but
6 just from the history of me being on this river
7 for ten years, those hatchery fish are pretty
8 much all done spawning by January. We don't
9 even start to touch those native fish coming
10 into the river until mid to late February on a
11 regular basis. Those hatchery fish are all done
12 spawning by then.

13 This is just my experience. I don't think
14 it's going to be an issue. You may have a one-
15 or two-percent inner breeding there, but I
16 think it would be very slim.

17 What does the state say about that?

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, earlier I said I
19 hate to spout numbers that I don't know about
20 because I'm not in the management side of it. I
21 don't work with that every day so I really don't
22 want to speculate, but I know the numbers are
23 low. Our -- our Mill Creek office, Chuck
24 Phillips, that group, you know, has sight of
25 that. Curt Kramer goes way back in evaluating

1 that.

2 MR. TINGLEY: I've worked with Curt a lot
3 on this issue.

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yeah. Curt -- Curt
5 has probably the best information about the --
6 the -- that particular issue has -- has been
7 dealt with and worked on by Curt Kramer and
8 others for years, going back way 20, 30 years.
9 Not just in this system, but others as well.
10 It's been looked at a lot.

11 MR. TINGLEY: One of the problems that the
12 scientists have shown is really what screwed up
13 the hatchery program so many years ago was they
14 took fish out of the Skykomish and they put them
15 in the Nooksack, and they put Nooksack fish in
16 the Cowlitz and so on and so forth. They're not
17 doing that anymore. They use the fish that
18 return to those rivers to restock them and to
19 run their hatchery programs. And since then
20 they haven't had near the problems.

21 There have been DNA tests done on hatchery
22 fish. They're the same. Those fish all came
23 from wild fish. The only difference in the
24 hatchery fish coming back is we time the runs
25 different.

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: We've changed their
2 life history.

3 Rich. Say your name.

4 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Rich Johnson, habitat
5 program.

6 A couple of things on -- on the -- on that
7 hatchery fish interaction. And this goes back
8 to my suggestion to -- to cease planting in the
9 lower river. And I -- and I -- and I didn't
10 mean to imply not to plant the 525,000. That
11 wasn't what I wanted to imply. I wanted to
12 imply plant all of those 525,000 in upper river.

13 And the reason for that, in terms of the
14 hatchery/wild fish interaction, is that the
15 lower river wild steelhead tend to be an earlier
16 returning and earlier spawning fish, and
17 therefore your interaction with those fish in
18 the lower river is more severe than it is in the
19 upper river where the wild steelhead are a later
20 returning fish.

21 And the second part of that is the fact
22 that the steelhead numbers, the early returning
23 component is severely depressed. There's
24 probably several reasons. The one that Chuck
25 pointed out is floods. Another one is going to

1 be the fact that we've concentrated our angling
2 effort in the early run by having hatchery
3 steelhead early.

4 Third is probably human affects on the
5 environment has been greater in the lower
6 watershed.

7 So there's a number of things that have
8 gone on there, and I'm just suggesting that
9 we're going to exacerbate those by imprinting
10 steelhead in the lower river, hatchery fish, and
11 bringing them back on the early -- what's left
12 of the early returning winter runs that come
13 back to that lower river. And I think that
14 that's something that should be considered
15 within the scope of the EIS.

16 MR. YAMASHITA: Aren't they considering
17 that by tagging the hatchery fish --

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Sir? Could you state
19 your name, sir?

20 MR. YAMASHITA: -- or clipping?

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Sir, could you state
22 your name?

23 MR. YAMASHITA: Dave Yamashita,
24 Burlington.

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Thank you.

1 MR. RICH JOHNSON: No. That -- that
2 doesn't get at that issue.

3 MR. STOCKING: What do you classify as a,
4 quote, unquote, lower river fish?

5 THE COURT REPORTER: Identify yourself,
6 please.

7 MR. STOCKING: Cal Stocking.
8 What do you call a lower river fish?

9 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Well, I would say
10 anything certainly from the Baker down stream.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

12 MR. STOCKING: We catch our majority of
13 fish down in that area mid February. That's
14 where a lot of those Bird's View/Hamilton fish
15 spawn. They spawn right in that area. And we
16 don't even start to see those fish until, at the
17 earliest, the first of February.

18 You know, I've got ten years of records
19 that go back and state where we catch fish and
20 when, and very, very seldom will we pick one up
21 down in that area -- never in December. If you
22 do, it would be a rare occurrence. Very rare.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Are you talking
24 hatchery or --

25 MR. STOCKING: No. Wild.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Both.

2 MR. STOCKING: No. Hatchery fish, we
3 catch those throughout the whole river starting
4 around mid November, Thanksgiving. Those fish
5 are usually done by December 31st. We have a
6 derby up there every year, Super Bowl Sunday
7 weekend. We might be lucky if we catch 10, 12
8 hatchery fish between probably 20 of the best --
9 best steelhead fishermen on that river. Guys
10 have been fishing 50, 60 years and we don't
11 catch any -- we might catch one or two native,
12 but those are -- those are the fish going to
13 the -- a lot of those are going up the Sauk.
14 We'll pick a few of those up in January, but
15 very few.

16 Like I say, we don't -- we don't see an
17 influx in those wild fish in the Bird's View
18 area come mid February, in that Hamilton area.
19 And that's where those fish are spawned.

20 MR. RICH JOHNSON: I appreciate that
21 observation and just remark that, No. 1, we have
22 had some fish counts by the agency that go back
23 a long ways to identify when steelhead start
24 spawning in areas, and No. 2, the -- the effects
25 of hatchery steelhead and harvest on -- and

1 those stocks goes back 50 years, not ten years.
2 So that's -- that's a pretty limited time frame
3 if you're talking ten years.

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes.

5 MR. McMILLAN: Bill McMillan,
6 Sedro-Woolley.

7 I think that the point that the gentleman
8 up here, Mr. Johnson, is trying to make is that
9 what we presently have, we -- we oftentimes tend
10 to be very personalized oriented. We think our
11 lifetimes is the way things work. I have a
12 number of historic books dating back to 1940
13 regarding the Skagit River. As late as in '53
14 and '54 the punch card catch in the Skagit was
15 over 16,000 steelhead. This was before the
16 hatcheries really came on line with the fishing
17 productivity. Most of those fish were wild.

18 You know, I imagine there was probably --
19 that was -- probably only represented about half
20 of what the original return was. If we were
21 managing correctly and we were only harvesting
22 50 percent, we're talking about a wild steelhead
23 population that was undoubtedly over 20,000 wild
24 steelhead. Yet we've created a hatchery
25 escapement goal here in recent years, we've cut

1 down from 10,000 steelhead to 6,000.

2 We've -- what we've lost, us in our
3 lifetimes can't understand what the Skagit River
4 was. And I think the gentleman is suggesting
5 that we have skewed, by our past management and
6 by hatcheries and by harvest, what the wild
7 calculation has -- what has happened to the wild
8 population and why they are failing more and
9 more because they've lost their diversity. The
10 Grandy Creek rearing pond isn't going to help
11 it.

12 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yeah. That's -- let
13 me make a point. I'm not proposing that we're
14 going to increase wild stock production by these
15 proposals. That's not the aim. It's to
16 continue -- try to keep the separation as much
17 as possible and improve that separation by
18 adding an acclimation site. I'm not trying to
19 say we're going to increase wild production or
20 offering recovery programs for these facilities
21 (inaudible).

22 That doesn't preclude the agency in the
23 future from looking at that if that's what it
24 takes or needs, or fishing pressure or things
25 change in the future. That could happen, too.

1 But in today's management proposed, the way we
2 are right now, for the steelhead, this is the
3 rationale on the proposal for this facility, is
4 to improve that opportunity and recapture those
5 fish to decrease our interaction.

6 MR. McMILLAN: Well, the history has been
7 not very good at doing that.

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you.

9 Yes?

10 MR. COLLEN: Don Collen again.

11 One thing I should point out to this
12 gentleman that just talked is that the Grandy
13 Creek Hatchery started operating in 1904 and
14 went to 1954 -- actually, production, the last
15 year was '51 -- but there was no tagging of
16 those fish. We were catching in the
17 neighborhood of 22,000 a year. How do you know
18 whether they were hatchery or wild fish?

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Precisely.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

21 MR. COLLEN: I mean, that's --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Grandy Creek
23 Hatchery actually --

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Wait. That's --
25 you're making -- let him finish first.

1 MR. COLLEN: Okay. What I'm saying is
2 maybe we did do something wrong back then, but
3 the point is that we did it. There's no way
4 around it. Okay.

5 Now, then, today we have the opportunity
6 of doing what the Department is wanting to do.
7 You people are fighting it.

8 MS. FISCHER: Why?

9 MR. COLLEN: Why? That's what I want to
10 know.

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Let's keep it to a
12 comment relative to -- I appreciate that
13 comment. That's a good comment. You've got a
14 point. But let's keep it focused on the pur --
15 let's don't personalize it. Let's keep the
16 comment on the purpose of what we're trying to
17 do, the proposal, and what your feelings are
18 about that, please.

19 MR. McMILLAN: Could I -- could I answer
20 that, please?

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Could you say your
22 name, please.

23 MR. McMILLAN: Bill McMillan,
24 Sedro-Woolley.

25 I think the best answer, what I've said is

1 this diagram right here, which shows the old --
2 we still have the graveyard of the past
3 hatcheries at Grandy Creek. Why are they a
4 graveyard? Because they failed. What's to tell
5 us that Grandy Creek, the present plan -- all of
6 those were -- all of those old graveyard zones
7 of -- of -- of the rearing facilities of Grandy
8 Creek, first the federal hatchery that failed in
9 1947 and was purchased by the Washington
10 Department of Game and subsequently failed,
11 represents -- what -- what -- why do we think
12 that this project, at the same site, is going to
13 provide us any better future as regards hatchery
14 or wild steelhead than what the past has?

15 MR. COLLEN: Lack of water is what's
16 caused the hatchery to go. They had surface
17 water out of Grandy Creek. Grandy Creek had a
18 big bed load movement and they were having a
19 tough time. They had no ground water. We now
20 have four wells up there. One a 30-inch casing
21 that was pumped for one full week with no draw
22 down, coming right out of the ground and going
23 right back into the river. And the others
24 showed the same effect. We have water now. We
25 have a better facility. That's why that one is

1 not going to fail.

2 MS. PRATT: Um, I would like to say
3 something. We -- we need to make sure that
4 we're concentrating on our purpose again, which
5 is to make sure that we look at possible
6 alternatives, make sure we look at suggestions
7 for impact and suggestions for mitigation, and
8 then also to make sure that we get your ability
9 to be notified and stuff, but that's -- we have
10 your lists and stuff.

11 So -- but it's really important, you know,
12 to concentrate on the purpose here. Because,
13 again, when we do the EIS, most likely -- I'm
14 going to insist on it, actually, so I won't say
15 most likely -- have another meeting which will
16 reevaluate the EIS and further discussion. So
17 it's really important for the scoping notice to
18 make sure that we get what your needs are inside
19 the EIS.

20 So let's try to focus, again, on the
21 purpose, impacts and discussion of any
22 mitigation you think that's necessary, if that's
23 agreeable.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ma'am, I'm sorry.
25 I got here late. Are you talking about another

1 EIS?

2 MS. PRATT: No. But this is a scoping
3 notice for writing the EIS. So that it's -- and
4 as I said, the purpose which is down but it's on
5 your scoping notice, is to look at optimizing
6 harvestable steelheads in Skagit County while
7 protecting naturally spawning steelhead as much
8 as possible. And granted, that is a very broad
9 based proposal.

10 One of our alternatives is building a
11 Grandy Creek acclimation pond, but there are
12 other alternatives that could be discussed. And
13 we're here to make sure that -- that your
14 discussion of those is presented, as well as any
15 other impacts we should look at with this
16 proposal.

17 And then you will also have the
18 opportunity to have written comments and to
19 e-mail them to me as well as to send them in.
20 So -- but when we write the EIS, if we -- you
21 think that there are gaps, it's very important
22 that you let us know and we'll have another
23 meeting and we can discuss those so that that
24 gets included. Okay.

25 I -- I want to keep us on task here

1 because we could go and discuss eons back and --
2 and we need to be as productive as possible.

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes. Mr. Johnson.

4 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Did anyone mention the
5 Baker River?

6 MS. PRATT: Uh, the --

7 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Or do you want me to
8 mention that?

9 MS. PRATT: I -- actually, I would like
10 you to mention it. Actually, there was a
11 proposal about making -- one of the alternatives
12 was Baker River. Partly because it's being
13 relicensed. Our major projects people have
14 suggested that, as well as one of the habitat
15 biologists. And they do have an acclimation
16 pond, but they have room for additional
17 acclimation ponds. It does have already a trap.
18 So that was like another alternative we could
19 look at.

20 Is there -- because I don't know anything.

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: State your name.

22 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Rich Johnson.

23 I had -- I -- as an -- as an additional
24 alternative for consideration that's similar to
25 the Grandy Creek but -- but different, was to

1 look at a facility on the lower Baker River,
2 basically in that gravel pit area there in the
3 town of Concrete. And I felt like it had -- had
4 some benefits over Grandy Creek. No. 1, fish
5 returning to Grandy Creek are not going to be
6 accessible to anglers once they're in Grandy
7 Creek. Fish that come back to the Baker River,
8 there's no reason people can't fish in the Baker
9 River and catch those fish in the Baker River.

10 No. 2, public access. Public access is
11 already provided on the Baker River at the mouth
12 of the Baker River. There's a boat launch
13 there. There's a -- there's a long beach
14 access. No such thing exists for Grandy Creek.
15 So your opportunities to harvest those fish, the
16 numbers of people, is greater at the Baker River.

17 No. 3, there's a dam on the Baker River.
18 You cannot get fish straying in the Baker River
19 that you don't want to stray up there, whereas
20 Grandy Creek that's not the -- that's not the
21 case at all. Those fish who come back to the
22 Grandy Creek, they scoot right on up the -- head
23 up the Grandy Creek and interact with the --
24 with the native population. Not only steelhead,
25 but they have other interactions with other

1 species that inhabit Grandy Creek.

2 Whereas in the Baker River there's a dam
3 there. They come back to the dam. It's already
4 fully manned by Puget Power. They have traps
5 that operate all of the time. Each fish can be
6 individually handled. They can either truck
7 them back stream, they can leave them there,
8 they can do whatever. They can take them up to
9 Marblemount for spawning. They can do whatever
10 they want.

11 And -- and the final thing is -- is the
12 water issue. Despite what's been said about --
13 about this Grandy Creek proposal not having an
14 adverse impact on -- on water, that's -- that
15 may or may not be the case, and I think it would
16 certainly be far less the case in the Baker
17 River which has -- well, probably has at least
18 ten times the flow of Grandy Creek. And if you
19 (inaudible) the same type of flow, why,
20 obviously it's going to be a lot less impact.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What do you propose
22 for root stock?

23 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry?

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Again, your comment?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What do you propose

1 for the root stock?

2 MR. RICH JOHNSON: I'm not proposing
3 anything over -- over what's already on the
4 (inaudible).

5 MR. YAMASHITA: Dave Yamashita.

6 Did you say there already was an -- a
7 facility in the Baker River system to imprint?

8 MR. RICH JOHNSON: There -- there's a --
9 there's an im -- imprint facilities on the
10 Baker. I don't believe they're being used for
11 steelhead.

12 MR. YAMASHITA: Where is -- where is it?

13 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: There are facilities
14 at the -- there's a barrier dam just upstream of
15 the mouth that are used for capturing adults
16 that are destined for upper Baker and they're
17 trucked around the projects.

18 MR. YAMASHITA: But is that an imprint
19 facility?

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No. They're not
21 actually -- they weren't built for that. It's
22 not to superimpose to say that they were --

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There is an imprint
24 facility in -- at Baker?

25 MR. RICH JOHNSON: That facility -- that

1 trap facility is being used to imprint Chinook
2 salmon, I believe. Isn't that right, Chuck?

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Correct, but it's not
4 suitable for the size of the program or
5 steelhead we're talking about. It's not --

6 MR. RICH JOHNSON: And I wasn't suggesting
7 that trap facility.

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. That's -- I
9 think that's the question.

10 MR. YAMASHITA: That's my question. Where
11 is the imprint facility in the Baker if there is
12 one, for steelhead?

13 MR. RICH JOHNSON: It would have to be
14 constructed.

15 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: There is none for
16 steelhead. Let's just answer like that. No.

17 MS. PRATT: No. However, just very
18 briefly, the major projects person said that's
19 potentially a way to use that as mitigation and
20 build an acclimation pond as mitigation for the
21 license. That's sort of how it came up.

22 THE COURT REPORTER: I need to change my
23 paper.

24 MS. PRATT: It's an alternative. I don't
25 know whether it meets the purpose or not, but

1 that's certainly -- is certainly something to
2 investigate.

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Can we -- can we
4 hang -- can we hang on for just a minute? She's
5 going to change her paper. Can we hold the
6 comments just for a moment? Hold that thought.

7 (Off the record.)

8 MS. PRATT: Since most of you were here
9 from the beginning, if you have not had your
10 questions addressed by 8:00, we have a paper
11 back there, and it takes us awhile to clean up
12 and stuff. I would love you to write them out
13 or talk to us individually while we're cleaning
14 up, but for -- to make it kind of sometime where
15 we can stay home with our families before we go
16 to bed, it would be nice to maybe try to end it
17 at 8:00 if that's okay with everyone.

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Does that work with
19 everybody?

20 MS. PRATT: If -- if it -- if it doesn't,
21 even one person, we'll --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We'll have an early
23 dinner tonight.

24 MS. PRATT: Okay.

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: All right. Thank you.

1 MS. PRATT: Okay.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes. Are you ready?

3 THE COURT REPORTER: Sure.

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

5 MR. FOWLER: I'm Scott Fowler. 12191
6 Pulver Road, Burlington. I'm the president of
7 the Wildcats Steelhead Club, and we are in full
8 support of an acclimation pond in the Skagit
9 River system. A couple of things that we are
10 concerned about and we think need to be
11 addressed in the EIS is, first of all, the
12 economic impact if we don't do anything at all.

13 Secondly, an impact if we remove the
14 hatchery system, period, and those fish are not
15 full-on viable for sportsmen to catch. And
16 thirdly, what's going to happen to the wild run
17 when the tribes can no longer target
18 hatchery fish? Those are the three things that
19 our club is really, really concerned about.

20 The reason we like the Grandy Creek fish
21 hatchery is, one, we spread the fishermen out
22 amongst the whole river so we don't have a Blue
23 Creek situation, so we don't have the problem
24 here in the Samish River where it's combat
25 fishing. And that is the main purpose and

1 reason we'd like the Grandy Creek hatchery -- or
2 I should say the acclimation site.

3 And those are our main -- the main
4 concerns that we're concerned about, is the
5 economics. The first (inaudible) came out and
6 figured it was \$17,000 per hatchery-caught fish
7 put back in the local economy, and -- if I
8 remember the numbers right, and that's a lot of
9 money. I spend a lot of money for what fish I
10 can catch. Our club members travel across the
11 United States to catch and keep steelhead. And
12 if we have more hatchery fish to target and
13 catch, the happier we'll be. And that's --
14 that's our main purpose.

15 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Great. Thank you.

16 Ron.

17 MR. TINGLEY: Just a little bit on --

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: You've got to state
19 your name, Ron.

20 MR. TINGLEY: Oh, excuse me. Ron Tingley,
21 and I gave you my address.

22 But the Baker site, some comments on the
23 Baker site. There's several projects going on
24 there that may adversely affect the -- the use
25 of that Baker site for the steelhead production

1 or acclimation pond there, and one is the lower
2 Baker Chinook spawning channel.

3 There's also some Chinook that are being
4 placed up into Baker Lake coming down, and then
5 there's the Sockeye program in both the Baker
6 and Shannon which has a real high potential of
7 putting disease in on top of these hatchery
8 fish. So I would be very much against the --
9 the Baker River site for an acclimation pond.

10 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

11 MR. STOCKING: Cal Stocking again.

12 I don't think there's anybody in this room
13 that doesn't want to see our wild or native fish
14 be rebuilt and have those back to where they
15 were 20 or 30 years ago. By giving the sports
16 fishermen an opportunity to catch hatchery fish,
17 and by putting more of those there, I think we
18 have a little bit more control of what we can do
19 on our native run to have it rebuilt.

20 And again, what he brought up with the
21 indians, if they don't have hatchery fish to
22 catch we're all in big trouble because they're
23 going to take 50 percent of the run whether
24 there's 6,000 or 3,000. They're going to target
25 those fish. And it's something we definitely

1 need to consider.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you.

3 Yes.

4 MR. McMILLAN: Back to the issue of --
5 Bill McMillan, Sedro-Woolley.

6 Back to the issue of the EIS scoping as
7 regards it's apparent that part of the objective
8 is to -- of this project is to distribute adult
9 returns through more of the river as regards
10 hatchery fish.

11 At the same time -- and this sort of
12 parallels with what Mr. Johnson brought up
13 again, is that at the same time, as part of your
14 goal, that also probably means that there's
15 going to be more -- more broadly disbursed
16 juvenile -- hatchery/wild juvenile interactions
17 through the Skagit as well.

18 I am -- I'm just wondering if the -- if
19 the EIS is going to build into it a -- a
20 thorough analysis of the potential impacts of
21 juvenile interactions related to the project?
22 Not just --

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: The answer to that
24 would be, on the last part of your question or
25 statement or question, the answer is yes, I'm

1 sure that's going to be part of it, what these
2 biological interactions for, in terms of risk,
3 or risk analysis, if you will --

4 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. Risk or?

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Risk analysis -- Gosh.
6 She yells at me.

7 THE COURT REPORTER: Sorry.

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: She's as bad as my
9 wife. Don't write that down.

10 THE COURT REPORTER: Sorry.

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes. Basically, yes,
12 it will. I know there's biological information
13 that's going to be provided to substantiate
14 the -- in terms of, you know, the ESA management
15 that we've got through National Fishery Service
16 to abide by, this compliance, if you will, is
17 to try to minimize that risk. This proposal of
18 this acclimation site, where it is and how it's
19 built, needs to take that into account, how it's
20 operating, what water it uses, how it raises its
21 stock, how it recaptures them, to try to
22 minimize that interaction.

23 And as I stated earlier, by not building
24 something and continuing to place fish in the
25 lower river, there's obviously, without

1 question, a higher risk without a place for them
2 to come back to or go, if they're not all caught
3 and removed in some manner.

4 Does that answer your question?

5 MR. McMILLAN: (Nods head.)

6 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. Yes.

7 MR. RIPLEY: Todd Ripley. A couple
8 questions about that that you may have answered
9 already or may not have a quick answer. The
10 first one is kind of a no-brainer.

11 Wild fish volunteers that go into the
12 hatchery are going to be (inaudible), I assume.

13 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. Wild fish
14 volunteer --

15 MR. RIPLEY: Wild fish that do volunteer
16 to come up into hatchery creek are going to be
17 put back into Grandy Creek?

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: All unmarked fish,
19 wild or otherwise --

20 MR. RIPLEY: That's what I mean.

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: -- would be passed,
22 that's correct.

23 MR. RIPLEY: Okay.

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: That's our management
25 now --

1 MR. RIPLEY: Right.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: -- anyway.

3 MR. RIPLEY: I assumed that.

4 And do you have any idea of what sort of a
5 gene they want to use yet for the release of
6 smolts as far as timing and processing of doing
7 that?

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't think we're
9 proposing to -- size and time is not going to be
10 modified from our present practices. The option
11 that a -- that an acclimation pond might give us
12 is to possibly look at a different window.
13 Maybe instead of -- I'll ask -- Chuck Lavier,
14 what's -- right now, what timing do we have in
15 planting these fish directly in the river?

16 MR. LAVIER: Starting on May 1st, and all
17 fish should be released by June 1st.

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

19 MR. LAVIER: They're usually planted May
20 1st until around the 20th of May.

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: All the fish.

22 MR. LAVIER: Yes.

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: On-station or
24 off-station plants. Right now we wouldn't
25 propose to go outside that window.

1 MR. BEE: That means -- excuse me. Gary
2 Bee -- you're imprinting them to Grandy Creek,
3 not imprinting them hopefully where ever you're
4 out-stationing them?

5 MR. LAVIER: I don't under -- I don't
6 under -- understand the question.

7 MR. BEE: You -- you want them to come
8 back to that specific -- imprint them right to
9 that hatchery.

10 MR. LAVIER: Right.

11 MR. BEE: As opposed to --

12 MR. LAVIER: Grandy Creek.

13 MR. BEE: As opposed to maybe in -- or
14 releasing them a little bit earlier someplace
15 else hoping they'd imprint to there and then
16 spawn in the wild.

17 MR. LAVIER: Right now we put some fish at
18 the Davis Slough.

19 MR. TINGLEY: Right.

20 MR. LAVIER: And they returned there, and
21 we don't have a trapping facility there.

22 One of the things that was brought up by
23 the HSRG who recommended the Grandy Creek
24 program is that we would have a trapping
25 facility there so that the fish would -- that

1 aren't caught by the sportsmen would return to
2 the hatchery and would be taken out so they
3 would eliminate or possibly eliminate
4 interaction with the wild fish. Right now we
5 don't have that.

6 MS. PRATT: What's HSRG?

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Hatchery Scientific
8 Review Group. An independent science panel
9 hired -- formed by the governor's office and --
10 to review our hatchery practices in the Puget
11 Sound, Straits of Juan De Fuca and the coastal
12 region.

13 MR. BEE: Very good.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Have they -- have
15 they completed the Skagit?

16 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: They have completed
17 the Skagit Basin. The recommendation for Grandy
18 Creek, as Chuck Lavier said, was to provide
19 some -- irrespective of this proposal. That
20 wasn't on their screen, to build that -- was to
21 provide some mechanism to recapture the adults
22 in the area that you're dumping them in the
23 river, or planting them and out-planting them,
24 that they come back to so they don't stray.
25 That was their recommendation.

1 MR. MCGOWAN: They didn't comment on the
2 number?

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Your name?

4 MR. MCGOWAN: Jeff McGowan, again.

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Your question?

6 MR. MCGOWAN: They didn't comment on the
7 534,000 as being appropriate.

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: They did -- the
9 comment -- the review that they took relative to
10 the analysis that was done -- they have a --
11 they have a biological risk analysis that
12 they're using that's input from the agency and
13 the co-managers that they evaluate the stocks,
14 the hatchery stocks themselves, how they're
15 released, where they're released, how they're
16 harvested, how -- you know, what the -- what the
17 stray issues are, et cetera, and they -- other
18 than the Grandy Creek returns for Davis Slough
19 where we're out-planting, they did not see any
20 issues relative to ESA concerns to the other
21 practices, the other releases.

22 In the back?

23 MR. KURSCHNER: James Kurschner.

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes.

25 MR. KURSCHNER: Everett, Washington.

1 What's the difference in plant size
2 between the Skagit and, say, the Skykomish River
3 for -- that are going to be hatcheries? Do you
4 have -- do you know that?

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: The Skagit is larger
6 than -- than the winter steelhead hatchery
7 plants in the Sky. Much larger. It's one of
8 the largest I know of.

9 MR. KURSCHNER: You mean like better than
10 a couple hundred thousand?

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yeah. I would say
12 almost double. There's a summer plant at Reiter
13 Ponds in the Skagit -- Sky and it is not in this
14 system. So if you add the two together it's
15 similar numbers, but in -- but in the Skagit
16 it's just winter and that's it, and it's -- and
17 it's greater than that by -- by a couple hundred
18 thousand. It's similar to the size of the
19 production in the Cowlitz system.

20 MR. YLENNI: Does that -- Mike Ylenni from
21 (inaudible).

22 Does that include the -- the fish that the
23 Friends of the Cowlitz put in?

24 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. I can't
25 hear him. Did that include the fish?

1 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Did that include the
2 fish that the Friends of the Cowlitz Co-op
3 project -- co-op -- co-op entity puts into the
4 Cowlitz.

5 The 90,000 summer steelhead I think you're
6 referencing there.

7 Yes, it does.

8 MR. YLENNI: Okay.

9 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes, it does.

10 MR. YLENNI: Well, on that, I just -- I'm
11 just kind of a foreigner so I'm kind of --

12 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Not with that question
13 you're not.

14 MR. YLENNI: One more.

15 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: It tells me you know
16 something about the Cowlitz.

17 MR. YLENNI: Yeah. Well, but I know a
18 little about the Cowlitz and the Friends of the
19 Cowlitz, and I watched what they did on the
20 Cowlitz, and things were going -- kind of going
21 downhill on the Cowlitz, and all the fishermen
22 got together and things are going uphill.

23 As a matter of fact, this old boy here
24 talks about if he wants to catch a summer
25 steelhead in the sunshine, you can go down to

1 the Cowlitz probably because they're getting
2 about one fish per rod.

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I think they're --

4 MR. YLENNI: So I think the thing that --
5 I'm a little -- you know, just a little
6 observation, because I'm no expert, just a
7 humble fisherman, but, I mean, I think that you
8 all might be a little bit better off if you all
9 got along and tried to get this thing going.

10 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: We're trying. That's
11 what we're here for. Good comment.

12 Yes, Don.

13 MR. COLLEN: Don Collen here again.

14 On the site itself, is there going to be a
15 residence there, a person in -- in residence
16 there, or are there going to be extra
17 enforcement?

18 I mean, we have a lot of problems with
19 some of our fish disappearing, and I was just
20 wondering whether there's going to be a patrol
21 on that? I don't mean thrown back in the river.
22 I mean taken and eaten or whatever.

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, that's a fair --

24 MR. COLLEN: And I --

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: That's a fair

1 question. I -- most likely we'll have -- well,
2 no, there's no residence planned, No. 1.

3 MR. COLLEN: Okay.

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay? So there's no
5 on-site, 24-hour standby that are at most
6 full -- full facilities. However, we probably
7 will consider the design to provide security for
8 the fish that volunteer in, the juveniles as
9 well as the adults. Meaning locked up, alarms.
10 And if it -- and if it's necessary, some
11 acclimation sites like this will provide a -- a
12 trailer house and a temporary employee for a
13 couple months to ensure that we have that
14 security.

15 MR. TUCKER: That means you have to feed
16 them.

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Say your name.

18 MR. TUCKER: Phil Tucker from Bellingham.
19 That means you have to feed them as well.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: The juveniles or the
21 adults?

22 MR. TUCKER: The juveniles.

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Thank you. Yes. Yes,
24 you do. Yes, you do.

25 Yes.

1 MR. BRECKENRIDGE: Yeah. Scott
2 Breckenridge from Mount Vernon.

3 When people spend money they like to get
4 some returns on their money. One reason I've
5 headed out and started fishing in the Skykomish
6 is because of the hatchery systems they have up
7 there. You at least stand a fairly good chance
8 of going up there and catching a fish. I will
9 say in the last few years I've fished very
10 little on the Skagit and I live on the Skagit.

11 A retention pond like this will bring
12 economic benefit back to the county, back to
13 cities that have been deprived for years and
14 years and years. We put highways that go over
15 the mountain for economic reasons. We put dams
16 in for economic reasons. Here is an opportunity
17 to introduce a fish back into the river for
18 economic reasons alone that would benefit
19 everybody immensely.

20 It will take pressure off the native fish
21 because you and I both know we'll go out there
22 and fish our butts off in November, December,
23 catch a few fish, brag to whoever it is, throw
24 them in the freezer and we'll quit fishing for
25 the rest of the year. I mean, eight out of ten

1 people are going to do that. Granted, two or
2 three people are going to guide people out and
3 they're going to make money that will go back
4 into the economy.

5 One other issue for the Environmental
6 Impact Statement, the pipe dream of the Avon
7 bypass. I mean, this could -- it's totally --
8 it's a pipe dream out there. Are these issues
9 going to get combined? Are they going to be put
10 together? Are they going to be -- is there
11 something in there that somebody's going to jump
12 on? That would be something that I would like
13 to throw on that paper.

14 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. The point just made
15 about a bypass, I'm not familiar with that, sir.

16 MS. FISCHER: It has nothing to do with
17 this.

18 MR. BRECKENRIDGE: I know it has nothing
19 to do with it.

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay. So I -- I
21 don't -- not having any idea what it is, I'm
22 assuming we're not prepared to even think about
23 it being a concern at this point.

24 MR. BRECKENRIDGE: Okay. That's --

25 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Okay.

1 MR. BRECKENRIDGE: As long as it's --

2 MR. MCGOWAN: I'll tell you all about it
3 later.

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't want to know
5 now.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Probably not.
7 (Inaudible.)

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Just a second. Let me
9 come back to Rich. Rich had a question over
10 here.

11 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Yeah, Chuck. I --
12 going back to what you were talking about, the
13 problem with -- with not collecting steelhead in
14 Davis Slough and collecting steelhead in Grandy
15 Creek, at one point you said there will not be a
16 collection rack in Grandy Creek. Is that
17 correct?

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I said we're not
19 interested -- what I did say is that we're not
20 interested in blocking the creek up. Okay.

21 MR. RICH JOHNSON: If you put a rack
22 across Grandy Creek, how do you not block the
23 creek off?

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I'm proposing right
25 now we're not going to put a rack across

1 Grandy -- rack across Grandy.

2 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Okay. That's --
3 that's -- that's what I want to make clear, is
4 what's being considered in the Environmental
5 Impact Statement, is that a rack in Grandy Creek
6 or is it no rack in Grandy Creek?

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I'm not proposing that
8 we're going to design a facility with a weir.

9 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Okay.

10 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: And you'll have
11 volunteer -- volunteer facilities, and depending
12 on the style of the intake, whether or not there
13 needs to be some sort of passage, you know,
14 issue met, because of what -- what -- the
15 compliance issues these days for a surface water
16 intake are very stringent. I think you're aware
17 of that. In fact, you're part of that, in terms
18 of those -- those compliance issues. And
19 sometimes it requires to put a structure across
20 the creek that the river flows over. And this
21 may not be the case. I'm saying that's one of
22 the styles that you can do, that has a certain
23 slope to it that might require some passage
24 around it.

25 Whether or not that hinders wild fish

1 passage or helps the collection, it may do both.
2 It may -- it may not. But I don't -- we're not
3 interested in putting a concrete, big structure
4 across the creek that blocks the passage, you
5 know, set it up and take it down, for what we're
6 interested in in collection.

7 I think something up the creek to get the
8 fish to come into the creek is going to be a
9 large step passed what we're doing now.

10 THE COURT REPORTER: A large what?

11 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: A large improvement
12 over what we're doing now.

13 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

14 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I changed my word.

15 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Do you -- do you have
16 any idea what that is?

17 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: No. At this point I
18 do not. I'm not going to speculate about that.
19 Our engineers are experts. FishPro has got a
20 lot of history with doing these kind of projects
21 around the Northwest, and we're going to have
22 that discussion, you know, brainstorm and come
23 up with the best option so they can -- they're
24 in compliance.

25 Does that help?

1 MR. RICH JOHNSON: No.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Are you satisfied?

3 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Not really, but --

4 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, can I make you
5 satisfied?

6 MR. RICH JOHNSON: Well, if -- there --
7 there's a big difference if you put -- if you
8 put a rack across -- across the river, across
9 Grandy Creek, it has advantages in that we make
10 sure that no wild steelhead go up the creek. It
11 also has disadvantages in that it makes sure no
12 other fish go up the creek. So there's
13 advantages and disadvantages to having a rack
14 across there. Plus it has other adverse
15 impacts, obviously, that you're well aware of
16 and I think everyone else is.

17 But what -- what I'm confused about is --
18 is basically the assumption that these steelhead
19 will come back into Grandy Creek, and they'll go
20 that quarter or half mile up Grandy Creek and
21 then they'll suddenly stop, and for some reason
22 they'll stop there and be collected by us. And
23 there's nothing been put on the table why would
24 they stop and why would they be collected. Why
25 would they stop volitionally and -- and allow

1 themselves to be collected by us, I guess is
2 what I'm getting at.

3 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I made a statement
4 earlier, and maybe you missed it. I'll restate
5 it.

6 At Tokul Creek we do that now. Okay? At
7 other facilities. At Reiter Ponds we do that
8 now. The fish do collect. They come back to
9 the hatchery. They stay. Even if they can
10 volunteer (inaudible), they don't en masse leave
11 the facility and go up stream. Hatchery winter
12 steelhead, or even (inaudible). And they -- and
13 if they do stray I'm telling you they don't go
14 very far past the hatchery. It's below or
15 above. It's not like they stray all the way up
16 to Marblemount because that's where we started
17 the rearing program.

18 THE COURT REPORTER: Because what?

19 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Because they were
20 started or reared at -- at -- at the hatchery
21 upstream doesn't mean they automatically stray.
22 If the imprinting is done at the right stage,
23 the right time, the right length, we can have
24 great success doing that.

25 So I can speculate, based on the

1 information that we have, in fact, good data
2 that we have, I can make that statement by the
3 agency, and, you know, you're -- you're just
4 assum -- you're making some assumptions that
5 they'll just stray. I'm saying that's not the
6 case.

7 MR. RICH JOHNSON: No. But is that --

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: But I think --

9 MR. RICH JOHNSON: -- is that straying, if
10 they continue up Grandy Creek? If they've been
11 imprinted on Grandy Creek water and they
12 continue up Grandy Creek, I wouldn't even
13 consider that straying. That's -- they're just
14 going up their native stream at that point.

15 And -- and the other -- the other point
16 I -- I'm just confused about is what's the
17 advantage of having them volitionally stop in
18 Grandy Creek versus having them volitionally
19 stop in Davis Slough?

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: I don't think we're
21 advocating that Davis Slough is necessarily on
22 the list for the future for plants. If we have
23 a full acclimation site in the -- in the -- in
24 the area of Grandy Creek or otherwise, why
25 would we continue with Davis Slough? I'm just

1 making a statement.

2 MR. RICH JOHNSON: But I'm just asking why
3 is Davis Slough a poor situation but that Grandy
4 Creek would be a good situation? I don't -- I'm
5 not seeing the difference between the two.
6 That's all I'm asking.

7 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: One has -- one's
8 proposed to have collection and one doesn't.
9 And that's the main thing. Okay?

10 Thank you.

11 MR. COLLEN: Don Collen again.

12 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes.

13 MR. COLLEN: You might be aware, I don't
14 know if you are or not, but on Davis Slough,
15 that when those fish come back the nets are
16 strung from one point to the other across the
17 ground. There's nothing that gets back up
18 there. The tribes are in there just like hound
19 dogs. So I wouldn't worry too much about Davis
20 being a bad thing, any straying or going up
21 there and spawning and having wild fish coming
22 out. I mean, the tribes pretty well take care
23 of that.

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Thanks for that
25 clarification. I didn't know that. Don't know

1 the fishery stuff all that well, tribal stuff.

2 I appreciate that.

3 MS. PRATT: We are slowly ticking down to
4 8:00. One last question if you have it, and
5 then we will dong this meeting.

6 What -- if there aren't any more
7 questions -- is there anymore?

8 One more.

9 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Kevin Kratochvil. One
10 more comment.

11 MS. PRATT: Name?

12 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Kevin Kratochvil.

13 MS. PRATT: Okay.

14 MR. KRATOCHVIL: I've been listening to
15 all you folks make very good points out here
16 tonight, and it's pretty obvious there -- that
17 there's a lot of controversy, confusion, and
18 maybe what I can offer in my support of Grandy
19 Creek is an opportunity to educate the public
20 and interp -- interpret for the public the area,
21 the Skagit Valley area, the Grandy Creek area,
22 the fishing efforts. I just see it as a pretty
23 unique opportunity to work with the Department
24 of Wildlife and the fisheries and -- and create
25 some more public education. It -- you know,

1 we've got to look years ahead.

2 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Excellent point about
3 education. It's important.

4 MR. KRATOCHVIL: Thank you.

5 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Thank you very much.
6 Okay.

7 MS. PRATT: The next -- is that it?

8 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Yes.

9 MS. PRATT: If there's -- you haven't
10 signed up, please do. We really need your name
11 and address. If you have additional comments I
12 can take them and bring them back with me to
13 make sure other people get them.

14 Yes?

15 MR. TUCKER: Phil Tucker.

16 Are you going to give us a report from
17 this meeting or a summary of this meeting or the
18 whole thing?

19 MS. PRATT: We can do that, I assume. You
20 will have that and it will be up on our web
21 site. That would be --

22 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: That's our preference,
23 is to try to post updated information as well as
24 our quarterly reports coming out to key mailing
25 lists. So it's important if you aren't on the

1 current mailing list that you get on one either
2 through our web site and/or mailing in that
3 com -- through your comments providing your
4 address so we can mail it back to you.

5 MS. PRATT: If you do not have a computer
6 or access to an internet, though, call me and I
7 can literally --

8 MR. TUCKER: And when do you expect this
9 to be available?

10 MS. PRATT: This?

11 MR. TUCKER: Or the record of this.

12 MS. PRATT: I don't know. That would be
13 (indicating).

14 THE COURT REPORTER: I can't talk and
15 write at the same time.

16 MS. PRATT: Three weeks?

17 MR. TUCKER: Three weeks? Before July
18 15th? When do we have to have our comments in
19 by?

20 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: July 15th is the last
21 day for the comments.

22 MR. TUCKER: So we won't -- we won't have
23 this by then.

24 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Well, probably not,
25 no. I would say by August 1st. Somewhere in

1 that range.

2 MS. PRATT: But if you wanted to -- I did
3 try to take some notes. Not well, though, but
4 I -- if you want to call me and find out about
5 something that you think has transpired here, I
6 won't have a copy necessarily of this, but I
7 have notes that I tried to take for my own
8 purposes. Because I need that, too. So do call
9 me.

10 MR. SIMONSETTE: Brian Simonsette.

11 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. Brian?

12 MR. SIMONSETTE: Simonsette.

13 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

14 MR. SIMONSETTE: From Stanwood.

15 Down the line, when is this -- if
16 everything goes, when is it going to be
17 completed by?

18 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: An EIS? To complete
19 the process?

20 MR. SIMONSETTE: No. No.

21 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: The whole thing?

22 MR. SIMONSETTE: The whole thing.

23 MR. CHUCK JOHNSON: Three to four years
24 out. That's safe to say. Without any major
25 snags or court challenges that -- that we can't

1 get through.

2 I'd like to personally thank all of you
3 for coming out. We really appreciate it very
4 much. And we'll try to keep you informed as
5 much as possible, okay, as to what we're doing
6 and why.

7 (The meeting concluded at 8:04 p.m.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2 STATE OF WASHINGTON) I, Mary Mejlaender, CCR,
) ss. a Notary Public in and for
 3 COUNTY OF SKAGIT) the State of Washington,
 residing at La Conner in
 4 said county and state, do
 hereby certify:
 5

6 That the foregoing Public Scoping Meeting of The
 State of Washington, Department of Fish and Wildlife,
 7 was taken before me and completed on July 1, 2002 and
 thereafter transcribed under my direction; that the
 8 transcript is a full, true and accurate translation of
 the meeting had therein;
 9

10 That I am not a relative, employee, attorney or
 counsel of any party to this meeting, or a relative or
 11 employee of any such attorney or counsel, and I am not
 financially interested in the said meeting or the
 12 outcome thereof;

13

14

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand
 and seal this _____ day of _____, 2002.
 16

17

 Mary Ellen Mejlaender
 18 NOTARY PUBLIC in and for
 the State of Washington,
 19 residing at La Conner.
 My commission expires
 20 10/2/04.

21

22

23

24

25